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# Appletons' Home Reading Books

EDITED BY

WILLIAM T. HARRIS, A. M., LL. D.

UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

DIVISION III

H I S T O R Y









Supposed landing place of Columbus,  
Watling's Island, Bahamas.

*APPLETONS' HOME READING BOOKS*

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# THE STORIED WEST INDIES

BY

FREDERICK A. OBER

AUTHOR OF SPAIN, PUERTO RICO AND ITS RESOURCES,  
TRAVELS IN MEXICO, IN THE WAKE OF COLUMBUS,  
CRUSOE'S ISLAND, CAMPS IN THE CARIBBEES,  
A LIFE OF JOSEPHINE, ETC.



NEW YORK  
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1900

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE HOME READING BOOK SERIES BY THE EDITOR.

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THE new education takes two important directions—one of these is toward original observation, requiring the pupil to test and verify what is taught him at school by his own experiments. The information that he learns from books or hears from his teacher's lips must be assimilated by incorporating it with his own experience.

The other direction pointed out by the new education is systematic home reading. It forms a part of school extension of all kinds. The so-called "University Extension" that originated at Cambridge and Oxford has as its chief feature the aid of home reading by lectures and round-table discussions, led or conducted by experts who also lay out the course of reading. The Chautauquan movement in this country prescribes a series of excellent books and furnishes for a goodly number of its readers annual courses of lectures. The teachers' reading circles that exist in many States prescribe the books to be read, and publish some analysis, commentary, or catechism to aid the members.

Home reading, it seems, furnishes the essential basis of this great movement to extend education

beyond the school and to make self-culture a habit of life.

Looking more carefully at the difference between the two directions of the new education we can see what each accomplishes. There is first an effort to train the original powers of the individual and make him self-active, quick at observation, and free in his thinking. Next, the new education endeavors, by the reading of books and the study of the wisdom of the race, to make the child or youth a participator in the results of experience of all mankind.

These two movements may be made antagonistic by poor teaching. The book knowledge, containing as it does the precious lesson of human experience, may be so taught as to bring with it only dead rules of conduct, only dead scraps of information, and no stimulant to original thinking. Its contents may be memorized without being understood. On the other hand, the self-activity of the child may be stimulated at the expense of his social well-being—his originality may be cultivated at the expense of his rationality. If he is taught persistently to have his own way, to trust only his own senses, to cling to his own opinions heedless of the experience of his fellows, he is preparing for an unsuccessful, misanthropic career, and is likely enough to end his life in a madhouse.

It is admitted that a too exclusive study of the knowledge found in books, the knowledge which is aggregated from the experience and thought of other people, may result in loading the mind of the pupil with material which he can not use to advantage.

Some minds are so full of lumber that there is no space left to set up a workshop. The necessity of uniting both of these directions of intellectual activity in the schools is therefore obvious, but we must not, in this place, fall into the error of supposing that it is the oral instruction in school and the personal influence of the teacher alone that excites the pupil to activity. Book instruction is not always dry and theoretical. The very persons who declaim against the book, and praise in such strong terms the self-activity of the pupil and original research, are mostly persons who have received their practical impulse from reading the writings of educational reformers. Very few persons have received an impulse from personal contact with inspiring teachers compared with the number that have been aroused by reading such books as Herbert Spencer's *Treatise on Education*, Rousseau's *Émile*, Pestalozzi's *Leonard and Gertrude*, Francis W. Parker's *Talks about Teaching*, G. Stanley Hall's *Pedagogical Seminary*. Think in this connection, too, of the impulse to observation in natural science produced by such books as those of Hugh Miller, Faraday, Tyndall, Huxley, Agassiz, and Darwin.

The new scientific book is different from the old. The old style book of science gave dead results where the new one gives not only the results, but a minute account of the method employed in reaching those results. An insight into the method employed in discovery trains the reader into a naturalist, an historian, a sociologist. The books of the writers above named have done more to stimulate original research on the

part of their readers than all other influences combined.

It is therefore much more a matter of importance to get the right kind of book than to get a living teacher. The book which teaches results, and at the same time gives in an intelligible manner the steps of discovery and the methods employed, is a book which will stimulate the student to repeat the experiments described and get beyond them into fields of original research himself. Every one remembers the published lectures of Faraday on chemistry, which exercised a wide influence in changing the style of books on natural science, causing them to deal with method more than results, and thus train the reader's power of conducting original research. Robinson Crusoe for nearly two hundred years has aroused the spirit of adventure and prompted young men to resort to the border lands of civilization. A library of home reading should contain books that incite to self-activity and arouse the spirit of inquiry. The books should treat of methods of discovery and evolution. All nature is unified by the discovery of the law of evolution. Each and every being in the world is now explained by the process of development to which it belongs. Every fact now throws light on all the others by illustrating the process of growth in which each has its end and aim.

The Home Reading Books are to be classed as follows :

*First Division.* Natural history, including popular scientific treatises on plants and animals, and also de-



scriptions of geographical localities. The branch of study in the district school course which corresponds to this is geography. Travels and sojourns in distant lands; special writings which treat of this or that animal or plant, or family of animals or plants; anything that relates to organic nature or to meteorology, or descriptive astronomy may be placed in this class.

*Second Division.* Whatever relates to physics or natural philosophy, to the statics or dynamics of air or water or light or electricity, or to the properties of matter; whatever relates to chemistry, either organic or inorganic—books on these subjects belong to the class that relates to what is inorganic. Even the so-called organic chemistry relates to the analysis of organic bodies into their inorganic compounds.

*Third Division.* History, biography, and ethnology. Books relating to the lives of individuals; to the social life of the nation; to the collisions of nations in war, as well as to the aid that one nation gives to another through commerce in times of peace; books on ethnology relating to the modes of life of savage or civilized peoples; on primitive manners and customs—books on these subjects belong to the third class, relating particularly to the human will, not merely the individual will but the social will, the will of the tribe or nation; and to this third class belong also books on ethics and morals, and on forms of government and laws, and what is included under the term civics, or the duties of citizenship.

*Fourth Division.* The fourth class of books includes more especially literature and works that make known the beautiful in such departments as sculpture, painting, architecture and music. Literature and art show human nature in the form of feelings, emotions, and aspirations, and they show how these feelings lead over to deeds and to clear thoughts. This department of books is perhaps more important than any other in our home reading, inasmuch as it teaches a knowledge of human nature and enables us to understand the motives that lead our fellow-men to action.

#### PLAN FOR USE AS SUPPLEMENTARY READING.

The first work of the child in the school is to learn to recognize in a printed form the words that are familiar to him by ear. These words constitute what is called the colloquial vocabulary. They are words that he has come to know from having heard them used by the members of his family and by his playmates. He uses these words himself with considerable skill, but what he knows by ear he does not yet know by sight. It will require many weeks, many months even, of constant effort at reading the printed page to bring him to the point where the sight of the written word brings up as much to his mind as the sound of the spoken word. But patience and practice will by and by make the printed word far more suggestive than the spoken word, as every scholar may testify.

In order to bring about this familiarity with the

printed word it has been found necessary to re-enforce the reading in the school by supplementary reading at home. Books of the same grade of difficulty with the reader used in school are to be provided for the pupil. They must be so interesting to him that he will read them at home, using his time before and after school, and even his holidays, for this purpose.

But this matter of familiarizing the child with the printed word is only one half of the object aimed at by the supplementary home reading. He should read that which interests him. He should read that which will increase his power in making deeper studies, and what he reads should tend to correct his habits of observation. Step by step he should be initiated into the scientific method. Too many elementary books fail to teach the scientific method because they point out in an unsystematic way only those features of the object which the untutored senses of the pupil would discover at first glance. It is not useful to tell the child to observe a piece of chalk and see that it is white, more or less friable, and that it makes a mark on a fence or a wall. Scientific observation goes immediately behind the facts which lie obvious to a superficial investigation. Above all, it directs attention to such features of the object as relate it to its environment. It directs attention to the features that have a causal influence in making the object what it is and in extending its effects to other objects. Science discovers the reciprocal action of objects one upon another.

After the child has learned how to observe what is essential in one class of objects he is in a measure fitted to observe for himself all objects that resemble this class. After he has learned how to observe the seeds of the milkweed, he is partially prepared to observe the seeds of the dandelion, the burdock, and the thistle. After he has learned how to study the history of his native country, he has acquired some ability to study the history of England and Scotland or France or Germany. In the same way the daily preparation of his reading lesson at school aids him to read a story of Dickens or Walter Scott.

The teacher of a school will know how to obtain a small sum to invest in supplementary reading. In a graded school of four hundred pupils ten books of each number are sufficient, one set of ten books to be loaned the first week to the best pupils in one of the rooms, the next week to the ten pupils next in ability. On Monday afternoon a discussion should be held over the topics of interest to the pupils who have read the book. The pupils who have not yet read the book will become interested, and await anxiously their turn for the loan of the desired volume. Another set of ten books of a higher grade may be used in the same way in a room containing more advanced pupils. The older pupils who have left school, and also the parents, should avail themselves of the opportunity to read the books brought home from school. Thus is begun that continuous education by means of the public library which is not limited to the school period, but lasts through life.

W. T. HARRIS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Nov. 16, 1896.*

## P R E F A C E

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ASSUMING that no literary work is considered complete without its proem, or introduction, this shall be my excuse for narrating how this particular book came into being.

I can hardly claim that it was by chance; yet it resulted indirectly from my first visit to the West Indies, in 1877, when, as an ornithologist ardently in love with Nature, I went there in search of birds. My self-imposed task took me into the forests and mountains, to dwell with the Carib Indians and negroes, as well as with the white cultivators of the coast plantations. From them I obtained a great deal of information that seemed to me of value, aside from that relevant to the subject of my investigations.

I learned, for instance, of century-old traditions, quaint folklore stories, pirate yarns and buccaneer tales. Now and again, as in Dominica and Guade-

loupe, Cuba and the Bahamas, I crossed the trail of Columbus, and, becoming interested, procured all the books that told of his discoveries, and refreshed my memory of historical events which ever after were real and vivid to me.

Though possessed of a love for adventure and romanticism, I was not entirely dominated by it, nor by my desire to exhaustively exploit the *avifauna*, or bird life, of the Antilles; for after I had completed this work (which consumed the greater part of three years and resulted in the addition of twenty-two new birds to the known species of the world) I felt impelled to seek a broader field.

In my wanderings throughout the islands during the years 1877-'80, I frequently met with reminders of Columbus; in Martinique I gathered material which eventuated, many years after, in a Life of the Empress Josephine; and in Tobago imitated Defoe's hero—as some readers of my Crusoe's Island may recall.

These chance meetings with great personages gave me a relish for historical investigation; and as it seemed, after visiting Mexico, Cuba, the Spanish Main, etc., that all West Indian roads lead back

to Spain, I went to that country to learn something more of American history. Hispano-American civilization, I found, had its origin in, or was strongly impressed by, the Moorish invasion from Africa centuries ago; so to North Africa I went also, returning thence to follow the course of the first Spanish voyages from inception to ending.

These excursions were on my own initiative and personal account entirely; but in 1891 I received a commission from our Government to visit every island of importance in the Antilles, and seek out whatever vestiges remained of the early settlements. This work, for which I received a medal from the Columbian Exposition of 1893, was in a certain sense complementary to all that I had done before, and enabled me to make a complete historical survey of the West Indies from the standpoint of personal observation.

Thus it will be seen that my researches, though pursued intermittently and in a somewhat desultory manner, extended over a period of quite twenty years. They resulted in a mass of material, from which I have selected what appears to me to be the most interesting events of Antillean history.

That my work is in any sense complete or exhaustive I dare not venture to assume, but trust it will at least quicken the interest already awakened by recent great events in that glorious archipelago inhabited by diverse nationalities, lying adjacent to both continents of the Western Hemisphere.

FREDERICK A. OBER.

NEW YORK, *February, 1900.*



# CONTENTS

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CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—SAN SALVADOR . . . . .	1
II.—COLUMBUS AND CUBA . . . . .	13
III.—THE SEARCH FOR CIPANGO . . . . .	25
IV.—AN INDIAN PARADISE. . . . .	37
V.—FRUITS OF THE FIRST VOYAGE . . . . .	48
VI.—THE CANNIBAL CARIBS . . . . .	59
VII.—FIRST FORTS AND SETTLEMENTS . . . . .	73
VIII.—THE LAST CACIQUES . . . . .	83
IX.—DESTRUCTION OF THE INDIANS . . . . .	97
X.—A CITY OF SAD MEMORIES . . . . .	111
XI.—MORE ABOUT SANTO DOMINGO . . . . .	126
XII.—BUCCANEERS AND TREASURE SEEKERS . . . . .	140
XIII.—THE CONQUEST OF HAITI . . . . .	156
XIV.—BLACK KINGS AND EMPERORS . . . . .	168
XV.—SANTIAGO AND HAVANA . . . . .	184
XVI.—JAMAICA AND THE MAROONS . . . . .	203
XVII.—PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLES . . . . .	223
XVIII.—IN THE VOLCANIC CHAIN . . . . .	240
XIX.—HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS . . . . .	251
XX.—BARBADOES, TOBAGO, AND TRINIDAD . . . . .	265



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Supposed landing place of Columbus, Watling's Island, Bahamas . . . . .	4
<i>Frontispiece</i>	
Route to and through the Bahamas . . . . .	6
Sea grape and palmetto, Watling's Island . . . . .	11
Lagoon on Watling's Island . . . . .	15
A country scene in Cuba . . . . .	16
Off Cape San Antonio, Cuba . . . . .	18
Contour of coast near Jibara . . . . .	20
Baracoa and Yunque Mountain . . . . .	22
The seat in the shape of a beast . . . . .	26
Seat carved of stone (Bahamas) . . . . .	30
Indians and canoe. (From an old print) . . . . .	34
Earliest map of Hispaniola . . . . .	39
Pestle of stone, with carved face . . . . .	42
Monsters of the air and deep. (From an old engraving) . . . . .	45
The Santa Maria . . . . .	50
A portrait of Columbus . . . . .	58
The guira, upper and lower view . . . . .	60
The second voyage, 1493 . . . . .	64
The waterfall (Guadeloupe) . . . . .	66
A Carib girl. (From a photograph) . . . . .	71
A Carib cookhouse (Dominica) . . . . .	74
Old Indians of Dominica . . . . .	76
A Carib canoe . . . . .	79
The site of Isabella . . . . .	81
Armor of Columbus . . . . .	84
The church of Santo Cerro . . . . .	85
Fort Concepción de la Vega . . . . .	87
Bell tower of the church . . . . .	90
Bringing gold to Columbus . . . . .	95
First forts and settlements . . . . .	

	PAGE
Preparing the feast. (From an old print) . . . . .	99
Indian implements, Hispaniola . . . . .	102
A battle between Spaniards and Indians . . . . .	114
Interior of Santo Domingo church . . . . .	120
Bartolomé de Las Casas . . . . .	124
Interior of the cathedral, Santo Domingo . . . . .	129
Leaden casket found in 1877 . . . . .	131
Cloister corridor, monastery of San Francisco, Santo Domingo	135
Por Castilla y por León, Nuevo Mundo, Halló Colon . . . . .	139
Bohios of the buccaneers . . . . .	144
Indians boucanning fish . . . . .	147
Old Spanish swords . . . . .	154
Market square, Cape Haitien . . . . .	160
Toussaint L'Ouverture . . . . .	167
General Jean Jacques Dessalines . . . . .	170
A court in Sans Souci . . . . .	179
King Henry I, of Haiti . . . . .	182
A cartman of Cuba . . . . .	185
The Cuban volante . . . . .	192
Havana in the seventeenth century . . . . .	197
A milkman of Havana . . . . .	200
A fair Havanese . . . . .	202
Saint Ann's Bay, near Christopher's Cove, Jamaica . . . . .	204
A country road near Kingston . . . . .	217
Aboriginal mealing stones, Jamaica . . . . .	222
Casa Blanca, Ponce de Leon's castle . . . . .	225
"Mammiform" stones, Puerto Rico (aboriginal carvings) . . . . .	227
Sea wall and governor's palace, San Juan . . . . .	229
Aboriginal "mask" and "collar," Puerto Rico (carved stone)	232
Harbor of Charlotte Amalie, Saint Thomas . . . . .	234
Date palms, Charlotte Amalie . . . . .	238
A coast plantation, Santa Cruz . . . . .	243
In the crater of Mount Misery . . . . .	247
Old sugar mill, La Pagerie estate . . . . .	254
The church at Trois Îslet . . . . .	258
"His Majesty's ship Diamond Rock" . . . . .	266
Carib boys at play, Saint Vincent . . . . .	271
Third and fourth voyages of Columbus to the West Indies . . . . .	277
A cocoa palm grove . . . . .	281

# THE STORIED WEST INDIES

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## CHAPTER I

### SAN SALVADOR

CHIEF among the Spanish war ships shattered and sunk by the American fleet off Santiago de Cuba, on the 3d of July, 1898, was a gallant cruiser of seven thousand tons, named, after a princess of Spain, the Maria Teresa. As flagship of Admiral Cervera's unfortunate squadron, she had led the doomed ships on their forlorn hope, and was one of the first to be overwhelmed by the terrible tornado of shot and shell that drove her, in a sinking condition, upon the Cuban strand. A few months later some naval engineers succeeded in floating her, and the hope was indulged that she might become an ornamental, if not a useful, member of the navy to which the ships that had wrought her injuries belonged. She was braced and strengthened, her gaping wounds were closed temporarily, and, like a crippled bird, she started on a voyage to the United States. All went well until the Bahamas were reached, when a storm arose, and, perforce, she was cast loose, after the crew aboard had been taken off by the ship having her in tow. It was expected that the Maria Teresa

would founder, being in such a disabled condition; but the convoy rode out the storm and then cruised about, as in duty bound, though without finding any trace of the quondam captive, and so reported on arrival in port.

Scarcely, however, had this news been given out when a strange rumor became current, to the effect that the cruiser had not sunk, after all, but had herself sought a last resting place for her bones on a coral reef off the southeastern extremity of Cat Island, one of the historic links in the Bahama chain. And the strangest feature of this romantic incident is that this vessel, bearing the name of a seventeenth-century infanta of Spain, had gone ashore off Columbus Point!

Another coincidence claims our attention in this connection. When the wreckers found the ship she was cradled on a coral reef, bolt upright; and they reported that soon after she struck, her only passenger, a large cat, leaped ashore and ran into the woods. When and by whom Cat Island received its distinctive name has never been determined, but it would seem that at last it is well applied.

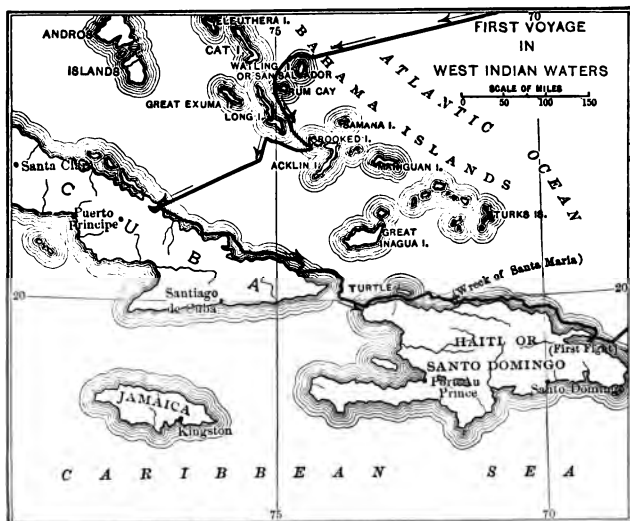
This island, forty-two miles in length and from three to four in breadth, lies about midway the Bahamas, a thousand miles from the port of New York, and in its general outline resembles Italy, being shaped like a boot. Columbus Point, which Washington Irving and many others claimed was the first landfall of the "Great Admiral," lies at the heel of the boot, where the shore is bold and rocky, rough and shelterless. The southern extremity of the

island, which in some places is from two hundred to four hundred feet in height, has a few great white cliffs, which form conspicuous landmarks. Like most of the islands of this archipelago, this one is almost completely inclosed within barrier reefs.

These facts are mentioned because there is an interest attaching to some island of the Bahamas, as connected with the first voyage to America, when, on that memorable morning, the 12th of October, 1492, boats from the caravels of Columbus landed on a reef-inclosed shore. Its native name was Guanahani; but, says Columbus, "to the first island I found I gave the name of San Salvador, in remembrance of His High Majesty, who hath so marvelously brought all these things to pass." It is unfortunate that the original journal kept by Columbus for the perusal of his sovereigns was lost, and the only portion copied neglects to give the latitude and longitude of the first landfall and landing place in the New World. Bishop Las Casas, his renowned contemporary, had access to this journal and made excerpts from it; but, not being a scientific man, he omitted the very data which Columbus, as a trained navigator, would have considered most important.

So it is that during the centuries that have passed since the advent of Columbus here, his first landing place has been wrapped in mystery—or, rather, has not been satisfactorily determined. One thing, however, is now known: that the veritable isle of San Salvador, or Guanahani, is *not* Cat Island, as for so many years erroneously believed. This we may say: That it is one of the Bahama Islands, that it

lies within fifty miles of Cat Island, either northwest or southeast, and that Columbus threaded his way through the archipelago, before he reached and explored the north coast of Cuba.



Route to and through the Bahamas.

It may be well, after all, that some of the problems of history and of exploration are left for the present generation to solve; and who knows but that some of my readers may have the pleasure of adding to the sum of information now possessed by the world? It will be a sad prospect, will it not, when there are no more countries to explore and no more worlds to conquer? At all events, though I myself have visited and examined all the islands of impor-



tance in the Bahamas, and have done so under the most favorable auspices, I can not affirm that I know exactly where Columbus landed. The island upon which I think he landed (and my opinion is supported by many persons who have investigated the subject) is that known as Watling's, named after one of the old sea rovers of the archipelago many years ago. It lies about fifty miles to the eastward of Columbus Point, is twelve miles in length by seven in width, and is shaped like a pear, with its stem at the southern end.

Whatever the impulse may have been—but I think it arose from a desire to verify the accounts I had read in old histories—it so happened that I one day found myself on the north coast of Watling's Island, and looking upon what, to my mind, was the very spot where, just four hundred years before, Columbus landed. Before me was a long, curving beach of sparkling sand about two miles in length; off shore, from a few hundred yards distant to about half a mile, lay coral reefs, where the great waves broke and threw up sheets of foam; but within this barrier the water was as calm as the surface of a pond sheltered by surrounding hills. Seashells on the beach and sea birds hovering over, sprays of Sargasso weed showing gold-green in the blue water, rainbow-hued flying fish glancing in the sunlight—all these were seen, also, by Columbus and his sailors. And it is as silent now as when they landed here. The only sounds that break the stillness are the shrieks of the sea birds and the roar of the breakers on the coral ledges. It is, indeed, more lonely now than then, for,

according to Columbus himself, the shore was swarming with those copper-colored people—the first of their kind he had ever seen—whom he called Indians. My readers, of course, know why: because he thought he had landed on the coast of India, and inferred that these naked inhabitants of Guanahani were subjects



Sea grape and palmetto, Watling's Island.

of the Great Khan whose land and court he was seeking.

It is lonely here now, and sad. The islands lie within the shadow of a terrible tragedy, the silver-sanded beaches are stained with blood; for, of all the laughing, innocent, and happy inhabitants of Guanahani who flocked to the boats by hundreds and thousands to see those "heaven-descended men,"

who paddled off to the caravels in their canoes, and who gave the Spaniards freely all they had, not a single descendant has survived to the present time. Columbus left the Indians without doing harm to any of them, and for years after his visit no Spaniard came to the Bahamas; but later on, when the Indians of Haiti had been decimated by their severe labor in the mines, and others were needed to take their places, the Lucayans (as they were called) were torn from their homes and transported. All those who were not carried into captivity were murdered, and so the islands were left desolate. Relics of these people are now and then found here, and I myself have seen many fragments of skulls, shards of their crude pottery, and some "celts," or stone spear and arrow heads. These last-named the present dwellers in the Bahamas (mostly of African descent) call "thunderbolts," having a belief that they are of celestial origin, and come down from the clouds during thunderstorms.

In place of the aboriginal inhabitants of San Salvador, to-day we find a population of about six hundred people, who gain a miserable living from the scant soil and the sea, by the most primitive kind of agriculture, fishing, and "conching." The beautiful species of conchs called the "king" and "queen" are found here in abundance, and also that which yields the rare pink pearls; in fact, from the nature of their most common occupation the natives of the Bahamas are known as "Conchs," throughout the islands.

Four hundred years ago the island was covered

with a luxuriant vegetation; but to-day, though it is situated to the south of the northern tropic, the growth is thin, and, while composed of many odoriferous plants, is not, strictly speaking, tropical.

Alongshore grow the dwarf palmetto and the sea grape, the latter having racemes of white flowers and a fruit upon which the parrots and wild pigeons feed. Mahogany is found in the interior; also the mastic, which is so hard that the old *palisadoes* made with it by military engineers a hundred years ago, are still in good preservation. Then there are the ironwood, *lignum-vitæ*, bullet wood, and the candle wood, from which last-named, as it is so resinous, the natives made their torches. Probably the very torch that gave the light Columbus saw as he approached the island, was made of this wood. The "butterbough," another native shrub, is so named from the glossy surface of its leaves, which furnish food for cattle, while the "corkwood" affords a good substitute for real cork, and is used by the negro fishermen to float their nets.

The aborigines used the leaves of the palm for thatching their huts, and from the native cotton, found here by Columbus in great abundance, they spun thread which they wove into hammocks, and the girdles which they sometimes wore around their waists. After Columbus had left San Salvador, and was on his way to the second island of the chain, which he had seen from the first, he overtook an Indian paddling a canoe, and "carrying a piece of such bread as they eat [*cassava*], a calabash of water, a little black earth with which they paint themselves,

and the dry leaves of an herb they very much value, because it is wholesome and has a sweet scent." This sweet-scented herb was probably the cascarilla (*Croton eleutheria*), which has a pungent, spicy taste, and when burned emits a musky odor. The natives knew of its virtues as a tonic and febrifuge, from the earliest times. As its specific name comes from Eleuthera, that island in the Bahamas where it was first found, this fact goes far to prove that it may have been there that Columbus first landed, instead of at Watling's, or farther south. This hint is thrown out for future explorers as well worth considering.

There is one fruit the natives of the Bahamas possessed, and which we must not omit to mention—the pineapple—which grew luxuriantly here, and to-day is a source of income to the inhabitants. Its botanical name betrays its origin, for *ananassa* is but the Latinized form of the aboriginal *anana*. Aside from the fruits and vegetables indigenous here, such as have been mentioned, and to which should be added maize or Indian corn, the cocoanut (an exotic, but probably brought here by the sea currents long before the advent of Europeans), and various roots and berries, the aborigines obtained little from the earth. But the sea was a bountiful mother, and yielded them fish in great variety, as well as turtles, conchs, mussels, lobsters, and crayfish. They had no large animals, and about the only living things Columbus saw domesticated here were the native parrots. There were also iguanas, which, as they live mainly in the trees and bushes, were not at first observed by the Spaniards. The parrots of San Sal-

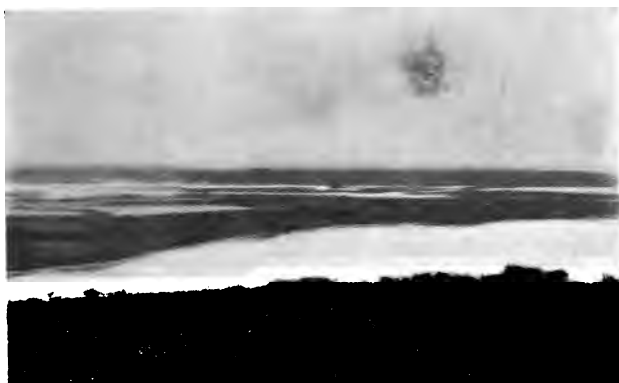
vador long ago disappeared, but flocks of them are still seen in Acklin Island, south by east of Watling's. In the second or third island visited Columbus saw and noted the mocking birds, which he called nightingales; but he was charmed with their ravishing music, and compared them, to their great advantage, with the songsters of Andalusia.

Now, I have inferred that this first voyage to America is already so familiar to my readers that it will not be necessary to repeat what other writers have recorded. It is what Columbus found here, and the forgotten or neglected facts leading up to, as well as forming a portion of, the earlier history of the West Indies, to which I would direct attention.

Columbus, then, had at last secured his caravels and his sailors, had fared forth from Palos, had touched at the Canaries or Fortunate Islands, and nearly crossed the wide expanse of unknown waters lying between Europe and the goal of his ambitions. "Two hours after midnight," according to Herrera, the old Spanish historian, "the caravel Pinta, being always ahead, made signs of land, which was first discovered by a sailor named Roderick de Triana. . . . When day appeared they saw it was an island, much wooded, well watered, and having a lake in the middle."

Herrera says it was a fresh-water lake; but if it were salt or brackish the description will apply to Watling's. According to the journal kept by Columbus, the vessels lay to just outside the reefs (it is a wonder they had not run upon them in the night), from which point he describes the view: "This island

is large and level [Cat Island is hilly], has a very large lagoon in the middle, and is all covered with verdure most pleasing to the eye." On Sunday, October 14th, he writes in his journal: "At dawn I ordered the boats of the ship and of the caravels to be made ready, and went along the island. I was afraid of a reef of rocks which entirely surrounds it, although



Lagoon on Watling's Island.

there is within depth and ample harbor for all the vessels of Christendom, but the entrance is narrow."

The "vessels of Christendom" were small and few in number those days, so the harbor at the north end of Watling's Island will answer well the purpose, having all the peculiar natural features mentioned by Columbus. "It is true," he says, "that the interior of the belt contains some rocks, but the sea there is as still as a well;" the accuracy of which statement I myself have verified.

Columbus sailed on toward Cuba, and never returned to the Bahamas. In 1512, Ponce de Leon came here to question the natives about the fabled Fountain of Youth, which he was then seeking; and again in 1521, on his way to Florida. It is worthy of note that in the year 1893 a vessel built after the pattern of the Santa Maria sailed over the course followed by Columbus from Spain in 1492, and touched at San Salvador, on its way to the Columbian Exposition.

The Bahamas were depopulated during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and for more than a hundred years they lay desolate. Finally, about 1628, the English gained a foothold here, and, though the archipelago soon became the resort of pirates, buccaneers, wreckers, and smugglers, yet civilization flourished apace, and eventually prevailed.



## CHAPTER II

### COLUMBUS AND CUBA

"THE most beautiful island that eyes ever beheld, full of excellent ports and profound rivers; . . . one could live there forever!"

In this strain Columbus wrote of the first island he discovered, when he had left the chain of the Bahamas and reached another land, after three days of sailing to the southward. It matters not much just where he first landed in Cuba; but while his earliest biographers in this century claimed the spot to be the Bay of Nuevitas, now the port of Puerto Principe, later writers have declared for the more open yet sheltered Bay of Jibara. Both harbors are on the north coast of Cuba, and I have entered both, and found many points of resemblance to the descriptions of Columbus in each place.

Several years later, on the southern coast of this same island, Columbus named one of the inlets he discovered Cienfuegos, or the Port of a Hundred Fires.\* If he had ever circumnavigated Cuba, and had not held to the belief that this great island was a continent, he might well have called it the Isle of a

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\* So named from an exclamation of a Spaniard at sight of the hundreds of lights ashore: "*Mira los cienfuegos!*"

Hundred Harbors, for its eighteen hundred miles of coast line is indented with quite that number of inlets and navigable bays.

Moreover, if we were to make a voyage around the island, we should find that each important port had a well-defined profile of its own, and that the landfall of every harbor is as unmistakable as the Morro of Havana. With its total area of about forty-eight thousand square miles, hardly one fourth of which is cultivated, with its yet virgin forests of cedar, mahogany, and precious woods and its unexploited deposits of copper, iron, and gold, Cuba still has most beautiful and commodious harbors without trace of town or settlement on their shores, and yet capable of containing half the navies of the world. Lying open to the adjacent Bahamas, Haiti, and Jamaica, as well as to the keys of Florida, these unoccupied harbors have long been the resorts of buccaneers and filibusters, who early learned their secret passes through the coral reefs. While the south coast has many good harbors, the north coast has more, and these latter have been more often the landing places of Cuban relief expeditions in recent years, owing to their proximity to Florida and its semicircle of reefs and islets, some of which are not more than one hundred miles distant.

From Cape San Antonio, the western end of Cuba, the north coast runs easterly and southeasterly for perhaps a thousand miles of tortuous length. South of the cape a curious phenomenon, described by Humboldt at the beginning of this century, has been noted, in the shape of a spring of fresh water



A country scene in Cuba.

of vast volume bubbling up from the depths of the sea, at which vessels may replenish their casks. Another peculiarity of this region, according to the same



Off Cape San Antonio, Cuba.

authority, is that the currents of the ocean run east one half the month, and west the other half.

The conical and table-topped hills, such as Columbus noted as he approached Jibara, are frequent along this north coast, the first to be mentioned, going easterly from Cape San Antonio, being those back of Bahia Honda, a port of the Pinar del Rio region, where the insurgents for a long time held the country and obtained supplies. Fifteen miles farther eastward is the harbor of Cabanas, to which the celebrated Pan de Cabanas, or Sugar Loaf Hill, gives guidance to the mariner. Another of these table-topped hills is the Pan de Mariel, twelve miles farther, and the approach to the harbor of Havana is made known to the sailor by a remarkable isolated hill seven hundred feet high with two round hummocks. Forty-four miles easterly from Havana is the fine port of Matanzas, likewise noteworthy for its peculiar *mesa*, called the Pan de Matanzas. All

these harbors mentioned are well known and much frequented to-day; but easterly from the port of Sagua is a stretch of wild country extending about six hundred miles, containing little-visited lagoons, with obscure entrances through coral cays, some with large streams emptying into them, which have been the resorts of pirates and smugglers for centuries.

At last, in our imaginary voyage, we reach the port of Nuevitas, outlet of the famed inland city of Puerto Principe, with which it is connected by rail. The bay is celebrated for its fish, which are fine and abundant, and for its sponge fisheries, which were carried on by the natives at the time Columbus came to Cuba. The large and sheltered harbor is reached through a river six miles long, the entrance to which is indicated by three small islands called the Balenatos, or Little Whales. It was this sea river, or some other near, that Columbus described as so attractive, and on one bank of which he landed, at the same time taking possession of the island, calling it Juana; and the harbor Puerto del Principe, in honor of Prince John of Spain.

"When in the Bahamas," says the historian Herrera, "the Admiral would lose no time at the island Isabella or others, but resolved to go in quest of another, which the natives told him was very large, and called *Cuba*, pointing to the south; he believing it had been Sucipango [Cipango], by reason of the signs they gave of it and the extraordinary way of crying it up." So, as we see, the aboriginal name has been retained, and the island is Cuba, and not Juana, to-day. His arrival here was on the 28th of

October, 1492, and, as was stated at the beginning of this chapter, he was probably attracted by the hills back of Jibara, three of which are called, from their shapes, the Sugar Loaf, the Saddle, and the Table.



Contour of coast near Jibara.

Good harbors he found so numerous that he was unable to decide which was the most desirable, and the same holds true to-day; for there are several on this portion of the coast of Cuba secure against all the winds that blow, and at least two large enough to float the fleets of Europe. Many are concealed behind barrier reefs of coral, nearly all are fed by streams with wooded banks, and one, the Bay of Moa, lies at the entrance of a river having a fall of three hundred feet, and which leads into a tangled, tropical wilderness. Silent and almost unvisited, these harbors, which might support fleets of coasting vessels upon their bosoms, and ought to be fringed with human habitations, exist at the present time nearly in the state in which they were found by Columbus, in the year 1492. The Admiral was very enthusiastic in praise of them all, but particularly of the harbor of Baracoa, which he reached toward the last of November. It was called by him Puerto Santo, and he writes in his journal respecting its river, which emerges from tropical forests and forms the harbor:

“The clearness of the water, through which the sand at the bottom may be seen; the multitude of palm trees of various forms, the highest and most beautiful I have met with, and an infinity of other great and green trees; the birds in rich plumage, and the verdure of the fields, render this country of such marvelous beauty that it surpasses all others in charms and graces, as the day doth the night in luster. For which reason I often say to my people that, much as I endeavor to give a complete account of it to your Majesties [Ferdinand and Isabella], my tongue can not express the whole truth, nor my pen describe it; and I have been so overwhelmed at the sight of so much beauty, that I have not known how to relate it!”

The writer of this book was at Baracoa just four hundred years after the visit of Columbus, and, like him, has felt the inadequacy of words to convey a picture of its charms. Rarely is the traveler, in any part of the world, afforded a more delightful view than that of Baracoa as seen from the sea, or from the high hills that rise behind it, where graceful yet majestic palms adorn all the slopes and grand mountain forms tower above the forest, vast and verdurous, that seems to retain even now its virginal freshness and primeval grandeur.

“Here,” says Herrera, “proceeding farther up the river, being allured by the clearness of the water, the delightsomeness of the banks, and the great variety of the birds, they saw a great canoe under a sort of arbor, capable of carrying fifty persons, made of one entire tree; for, while the Indians had no iron tools, their instruments being merely flints, yet

though the trees were large their hearts were soft and spongy, and easily hollowed out."

This port was so praised by Columbus that here, in 1512, was founded the first city in Cuba, by Diego Velasquez, who had come over from Hispaniola and landed first on the southern coast. A Cuban historian says: "It is situated near the eastern extremity of the island, the surroundings presenting an extensive plain gradually sloping from the mountains down to the shore, intersected by valleys and richly wooded, from which streams fall into the sea, affording, with all the



Baracoa and Yunque Mountain.

beauties of tropical vegetation, a picture of enchantment." But the most notable feature of the environment of Baracoa has not been mentioned yet—the famous and picturesque Yunque (the Anvil), a beautiful *mesa* with level top, eighteen hundred feet in height, and visible forty miles at sea. This grand landmark guided Columbus to the port, and he particularly dwells upon it in his journal as an impressive natural object. From time immemorial it has been a sacred mountain to the natives, and their traditions say that in the morning, when the



first rays of the sun illumine the eastern cliffs, the face and figure of their great cazique, who once dwelt on the summit plain of Yunque, can be seen traced upon the perpendicular walls.

It was either at Baracoa, or from some bay like that of Moa, that Columbus sent that famous embassy to the Great Khan, believing that he had at last arrived at the borders of the kingdom of Cathay or Cipango, his mind being filled with the stories related by that eminent Venetian traveler, Marco Polo. As my readers are probably acquainted with the story, and as my object is merely to localize the events of West Indian history, rather than to detail them, we will not narrate them at length. However, let us recall that Columbus sent two Spaniards on this mission to the mythical Grand Khan, who were accompanied by an Indian of San Salvador and another of Cuba. One of the Spaniards was a Jew, who spoke not only Castilian, but Hebrew and Chaldaic, some say Arabic. "Columbus gave them things to barter, and set them six days to return in, with instructions how to speak in the name of their Catholic Majesties." And they were to travel inland until they found the golden province of the island, which the natives called *Cuba-nacán*, where they were to speak with the king, as already mentioned. They traveled twenty-two leagues, through forests vast and deep, crossing rivers and climbing mountains, and at last came to the much-vaunted capital city, which proved, alas! to be neither grand nor beautiful, but merely a straggling village of thatched huts. The people received them as if, indeed, they were heaven-

descended, placed before them all they had in the way of eatables, such as maize and yucca bread, and caused them to sit down "on seats made of one solid piece of wood, in the shape of a beast with very short legs and the tail held up, the head before, with eyes and ears of gold." These "seats," I may remark in passing, have been found—or some like them



The seat in the shape of a beast.

—in the Bahamas, and in Haiti, some made of wood, as here described, and others of stone, proving the account by Columbus to be correct.

From the historian we learn that at night "each Indian carried a firebrand in his hand, to light fire, and perfumed themselves with some herbs; and the fire was easily kindled, because they had a sort of wood which, if they worked one piece against another, as if they had been boring a hole, it took fire." This method of making a fire, as every American knows, was practiced by all the aborigines of the New World at the time of their discovery by the white people. "They also saw a multitude of several sorts of trees, such as they had not seen on the seacoast, and a great variety of birds, such as partridges [ground doves] and nightingales [mocking birds]. But they met with no four-footed creatures, except the little cur dogs that do not bark."

These "little cur dogs that do not bark" may have been raccoons, which the Indians had tamed,

or they may have been, as some writers think, an animal which is now extinct.

There are but four mammals known to belong to Cuba: two species of a small animal called the *utia*, another known as the *almiqui*, and the *javalli*, or native wild hog. This last-named was also seen by the first arrivals, for Herrera says: "In one of the islands they killed with their swords a beast that was like a wild boar." This much for the animals the first Spaniards saw on land.

The houses of the Indians, they said, "were like tents, with an open portal before them, covered with leaves of trees [palm thatch], well fitted for the rain and weather, with vents for the smoke and ridges at the top, handsomely made. And within them there was no other household stuff, or ornament, than what the Indians carried aboard the ships to barter; but their beds were a net made fast to two posts, and which are called *hamacas*." The first Indians seen in Cuba fled from their huts, leaving behind them crude nets and fishing tackle, and they carried their drinking water in gourds or calabashes.

To the great disappointment of Columbus, his embassy returned without any tidings of a Great Khan or any other potentate, and with only the meager gatherings of their journey. They reported that the Indians were kind and polite enough to have been inmates of courts, but that there were not any courts or royal assemblages—neither, for that matter, any royalty to assemble—for the only personage having authority was called a *cacique*, and he went about clad like the rest—that is, solely in "nature's garb."

Neither in Cuba nor in the Bahamas did the Spaniards find more than a mere trace of gold; now and then an Indian nose ornament of that precious metal which Columbus so ardently desired to secure. But, without at the time being aware of its value, the Spaniards found a treasure far more precious than gold: the since famous Indian corn, or maize, the golden grains of which, so far as we can ascertain, were first gathered in Cuba. "They [the Indians] had much ground sowed with their roots [*manioc*] and that sort of corn called *mayz*, well tasted, either boyl'd or ground into flour." It will be well to remember that the present Latin name of this corn was derived directly from the Indian: one of the many words for which we are indebted to the American aborigines.

The ambassadors also saw vast quantities of fine-spun cotton—a hutful, in fact—from which the Indians wove their girdles and hammocks. These natural gifts were not appreciated as they should have been, for the shortsighted Spaniards were clamorous only for gold; still they preserved some specimens of the country's products, which were later exhibited before the Spanish court, after Columbus had performed his triumphal journey across Spain from Palos to Barcelona.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SEARCH FOR CIPANGO

"BEING asked about gold and pearls, the natives of Cuba said there was an abundance at Bohio, pointing to the eastward. . . . By this name of Bohio [which was the island later called Hispaniola] it seemed the Indians would signify it was a land full of *bohios*—that is, cottages [or huts]." \*

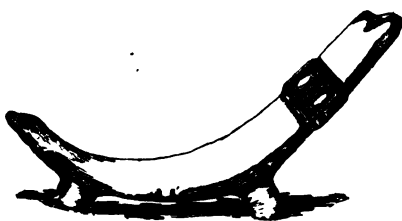
The final departure of Columbus from Cuba was practically taken from the port of Baracoa, twenty-two miles distant from which, with a few small harbors intervening, is Cape Maysi, the extreme eastern tip of the island. At the present time the tower of the Faro Concha, or shell lighthouse, is one of the notable landmarks of Cuba, with its light one hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea, and visible seventeen miles in clear weather. From this point, as in the days of Columbus, when it was doubled by him in 1492, all mariners take their departure through the Windward Passage to southwestern Haiti, Jamaica, and the Isthmus of Panama. It still retains, as we may note, its aboriginal name; and in fact, though the Indians of Cuba were long since

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\* In the Indian language: *Bo*, great; *hio*, country—the Great Country.

exterminated by the cruel Spaniards, they have left behind them ineffaceable evidences of their former existence in this beautiful island.

Other relics of these gentle people have been found in their implements of agriculture and the chase, such as stone hatchets, arrow heads, hoes, fishing "sinkers," and stone seats. Not many years ago a most valuable "find" was made of some Indian skulls, in a great cave not far from Cape Maysi, which had lain so long there, in the bottom of the cavern, that they were entirely covered, as if petrified, with a deposit of stone, formed by water which held lime in solution dropping from the roof. I



Seat carved of stone (Bahamas).

shall in a future chapter allude to the fate of these innocent natives, who were, through no fault of their own, made the victims of Spanish hate and cruelty.

Instead of following directly after Columbus, as he stretched across the Windward Passage in quest of Bohio, which was also called by the natives Babeque, let us complete our investigations into his connection with the island of Cuba. Anticipating by nearly eighteen months the actual sequence of events, we shall find that he returned to this coast in April, 1494, while the town of Isabella was being built and put in order. Taking up the thread of exploration at Cape Maysi, which he had called "Alpha and

Omega," Columbus sailed along the southern coast of Cuba westerly until he came to the Bay of Guantánamo, which he called Puerto Grande, and with the beauty of which he was impressed; for "the entrance was narrow and winding, though deep; the harbor expanded within like a beautiful lake, in the bosom of a wild and mountainous country covered with trees, some of them in blossom, others bearing fruit." Landing here, the Spaniards found traces of Indians, who had fled at their approach, but who left a plentiful supply of fish, utias, and iguanas roasting before open fires, and spread out as if for a banquet, and which the half-famished sailors greedily devoured. Guantánamo (pronounced guan-tahn'-ah-mo) was the scene of another invasion, four hundred and four years later, when the American marines engaged in the war with Spain landed here—the first of our armed men to "take soil" in this island. Theirs was the first blood shed in the conflict with the Spanish guerrillas in this war, and all Americans will hereafter regard this beautiful bay with renewed interest, since its waters were reddened by the blood of heroes fighting in the cause of Cuban liberty.

Coasting still westerly, Columbus espied and entered the harbor of Santiago de Cuba, its tortuous channel guarded by stupendous cliffs, since crowned by picturesque Morro Castle. As we shall devote a future chapter to this region when we narrate the story of Cuban settlement and conquest, we will not tarry now, but continue on after the Admiral, whose fortunes we are for the moment following. He pur-

sued his course along the steep-to shore, past the beaches where, in 1898, the flower of Spain's navy was crushed and sunk by the dash and gallantry of American sailors. It may not be inappropriate to pause a moment and note one more strange coincidence connected with the sinking of Cervera's fleet, in addition to the one we mentioned in the first chapter. Among the battle ships that so bravely came out to meet their fate on that bright morning, the 3d of July, 1898, was one named the Cristobal Colon, *anglice* Christopher Columbus. Possessing superior speed to the others, and making a longer flight than its companion war ships, it was the last to be destroyed, and was driven ashore and sunk within sight of the very point whence Columbus took his departure from the coast of Cuba for the more southern island of Jamaica!

This departure was on the 3d of May, 1494. After discovering and coasting the northern shore of Jamaica, and satisfying himself that it was not the auriferous Babeque, he returned once more to the Cuban coast, making land at the high point which he called Cabo de la Cruz, a name it bears to-day. Inland rose to the sky glorious and cloud-wreathed Turquino, a mountain of greater altitude than any other in the Antilles; but he was not to be lured backward, and continued still to the west. It was not long before the Spanish caravels were entangled in that labyrinth of isles, islets, and reefs, so beautiful to observe as they lay fresh and verdurous upon the glassy waters, but so perplexing to a navigator, to which Columbus gave the name of Gardens of the Queen



(*las Jardines de la Reina*). The shores of the largest islands and of the mainland were populous with the same innocent Indians he had seen on the north coast and in the Bahamas, and they were bountifully supplied with fish, tortoises, "dumb dogs," parrots, and scarlet flamingoes. Here the Spaniards observed that curious mode of "fishing with a fish," pursued by the Indians with the remora: "Tying a line of great length to the tail of this fish, the Indians permitted it to swim at large until it perceived its prey, when, darting down swiftly, it attached itself by its sucking disks (on the top of its head) to the throat of a fish, or to the underside of a tortoise; nor did it relinquish its prey until both were drawn up by the fishermen and taken out of the water. In this way the Spaniards witnessed the taking of a tortoise of immense size, and Fernando Columbus affirms that he himself saw a shark caught in the same manner on the coast of Veragua."

More open navigation succeeded to the labyrinthine archipelago, and, a high mountain being sighted, Columbus landed again on the main island, probably somewhere near the port of the present city of Trinidad, where, from the assembled Indians, he received such information as confirmed him in the belief that he was indeed on the coast of Asia. Borne by spicy breezes westward, within sight of a shore then populous with Indians, but now practically deserted, the Spaniards passed the inlet making toward the present city of Cienfuegos, and then to their farthest point in this direction, a little beyond the Bay of Batabano. Says the great Humboldt, who coasted

this same shore in 1801: "These regions possess a charm that is wanting in the greater part of the New World, for they recall to the mind memories which cluster around the greatest names of the Spanish monarchy—Columbus and Hernan Cortes. It was on the southern coast of the island of Cuba, between the Bay of Jagua and the Isle of Pines, that Columbus, during his second voyage, beheld with admira-



Indians and canoe. (From an old print.)

tion 'that mysterious king who communicated with his subjects by signs only, and that group of men wearing long white gowns, like begging friars, while all the rest of the people were naked.'" Usually accurate, Humboldt in this instance is slightly at fault, for it was not Columbus, but one of his frightened archers, who had penetrated the forest in ad-

vance of his comrades, and who related this fanciful tale to his credulous commander. But Columbus believed it; though doubtless it was false, as no others like these men were ever seen afterward.

When at a point beyond Batabano, which Columbus called Serafin, he was less than twenty miles distant from the north coast of the island, and if he could but have looked across, the error would have been dispelled in which all the rest of his life he believed: that Cuba was a continent, and probably Asia, "beyond the boundaries of the Old World as laid down by Ptolemy." But he saw a mountain to the southward, and, instead of continuing on, westerly and northerly, he sailed for what is now known as the Isle of Pines, and which he named Evangelista. It was reserved for Ocampo, in 1508, to first circumnavigate Cuba, and obtain the credit for the information that it was indubitably an island. Thus, in ignorance that he had come so near to solving one of the greatest and most perplexing problems of his life, Columbus turned his back on Cuba, and retraced his course, easterly at first, then southerly, to Jamaica again. In brief, he coasted the southern shores of the latter island, thence made over to the south coast of Haiti, for the first time bringing these regions to view, and, after sailing completely around the last-named island, arrived at Isabella early in September, 1494, after nearly five months' absence, worn out with bodily fatigues and mental suffering.

Once more Columbus was destined to look upon the southern coast of Cuba, and this was near the end of his last and most disastrous voyage, in the year

1503. He made, as we know, four voyages to America: in the first discovering the Bahamas, Cuba, and the north coast of Haiti, or Hispaniola; in the second some of the Caribbees, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica; in the third striking farther to the south, discovering the island of Trinidad and the north coast of South America at Paria; in the fourth, and last, making a wider sweep and reaching the east coast of Honduras. And it was on this last despairing venture of his, when he was already infirm from the many vicissitudes of his seafaring life, that he came, in a roundabout way, to the scene of his explorations in 1494.

It was on the 30th of May, 1503, that, in endeavoring to make Hispaniola from the coast of Veragua, the shattered caravels of Columbus were driven by a storm within sight of the Queen's Gardens. His vessels had been bored full of holes by the teredo, and, to add to his apprehension, a terrible tempest drove them at its mercy among the cays. The crews were worn out with watching and bailing, and both vessels of the small fleet were shattered by coming into collision. In this condition they arrived at the province of Macaca, near Cabo de la Cruz, where, nine years before, Columbus had been so well treated by the Indians. They were still kind and hospitable, and furnished the suffering mariners with a store of cassava bread, being as yet free and in possession of all the bounties of Nature. Taking aboard the bread, together with wood and water, the caravels proceeded, in a sinking condition, to Jamaica, where they were run ashore, and where Columbus

and his men remained a year, before assistance came to them from Hispaniola. This episode forms the subject of another story, and will be narrated in due course; yet we can not but pause to reflect upon the terrible changes that had already been wrought in the life of our hero, whom we saw at the outset of his Cuban voyagings buoyant and full of hope, thrilled with the thought that he was soon to be in converse with kings and potentates; now broken and depressed, victim of royal distrust and official villainies, menaced by the Indians of Jamaica, a prisoner on his shipwrecked hulk upon the strand.

One of the most delightful of my recollections is that of a scene I once viewed on the north coast of Haiti. I was then on board ship, passing through the "canal," or narrow passage, between Haiti and the smaller island of Tortuga. The water was as smooth as glass, and between Tortuga and the main island numerous boats and canoes were passing, each little craft bearing a black cultivator of the soil to or from his garden, and laden with fruits and vegetables, or else containing a sable fisherman with the primitive implements of his humble calling. On the one hand lay the gray crags of Tortuga, the Turtle Island, so named by Columbus, and years after he had discovered it the haunt of bloodthirsty buccaneers; on the other the hill-tossed island of Haiti, its mountains blue-tipped with distant haze, while near at hand lay smiling valleys, abloom with many a flower. It was a scene of peace and plenty, of picturesque contentment: such, according to my fancy, as greeted



Babeque, the Land of Gold, lay east and southward; and there is every reason for believing that Haiti was the land they meant. The name by which it is at present known is aboriginal, Ai-ti, the Highland, one portion of which was also called by the natives Quisqueya, or Mother of the Earth, and is now known as Santo Domingo.

The first port in Bohio, or Babeque, that Columbus entered he called San Nicolas, and he found it safe, capacious, and deep, encompassed with thick woods, the land hilly; a pleasant river ran into the harbor, and on the shore there were many canoes as large as a brigantine of twenty-five oars. Fish were abundant in the bay and birds of sweetest song disported in the trees on shore, while the air was balmy and the weather delightful. He did not make a long stay in this noble harbor, but sent the little Niña, smallest caravel of the fleet, ahead to make soundings, slowly following in the flagship Santa Maria. Some time before leaving the coast of Cuba Captain Pinzon, in the Pinta, had sailed ahead of the others, and left Columbus with only the two vessels we have named. This matter gave Columbus great concern, for a storm was brewing when he arrived in the channel, the dangers of which he escaped by seeking a "lee" under the cliffs of picturesque Tortuga.

From this coign of vantage he gazed long and earnestly upon the beautiful island across the narrow strip of water, and pondered upon a name for it that should fittingly imply its great advantages. To the first island he landed on in the Bahamas he

had given the name of San Salvador, "in honor of God"; to the second La Concepción, "with respect to the Mother of God"; to the third Fernandina, in honor of King Ferdinand; to the fourth Isabella, after the Queen; to the fifth Juana, after the Princess, their daughter; and to the sixth, and last, La Española, or the Spanish Island (since corrupted to Hispaniola), "though some thought it should have been called Castellana, after Castile." Though the names bestowed by Columbus were euphonious, yet most of them have been supplanted by others, and in two or three instances the Indian appellations have been restored.





## CHAPTER IV

### AN INDIAN PARADISE

THE people seen at San Nicolas were similar to those found in the Bahamas and Cuba, having the same complexion, with long and coarse black hair, small hands and feet, and robust habit. They were shapely, some of them comely and all of them cleanly. They were as joyous and free from care as the others, but apparently more industrious and attentive to their persons. Possessing a vast and fertile island, endowed with every blessing of exuberant nature, they cultivated large fields of cassava and maize, and around their huts, which were similar to those of Cuba, grew many tropical fruits and vegetables, such as the *anana*, or pineapple, the *aje*, or native pepper, and also fragrant herbs. They worked but seldom, and were comparatively idle, being fond of dancing and singing native songs, called *areytos*, accompanied to the music of a drum made from a hollowed log covered with skin. They liked to indulge in tobacco, the smoke from which they inhaled through a tube with two branches, one for each nostril, until the fumes reduced them to a state of stupefaction. They had canoes dug out of trees, and implements of stone (for all the Indians of the West Indies were in that stage of civilization called the "stone

age," and knew nothing of iron or copper). They could not but be attracted by gold, which they found in glittering particles in the streams, and so ductile that they easily wrought it into rude ornaments; but they seem to have known no use for any other metal. They could not understand the inordinate greed for gold possessed by Columbus and his men, for they had not the vice of covetousness, and when such gold as they had was asked of them they gave it freely.

The first woman captured at San Nicolas had a nose plate of gold, and this kind of ornament was worn more than any other, except, perhaps, rude anklets and bracelets. This female captive was very much alarmed, as the Spaniards had only caught her after a long chase through the forest, and was brought, struggling and shrieking, aboard the flagship, where she cowered in apprehension. To allay her fears, "the Admiral gave her hawk bells [which were small and round, something like old-fashioned sleigh-bells] and strings of glass beads, then caused a shirt to be put on her, and so sent her away, with three of the Indians he had brought with him [from Cuba] and three Spaniards, to bear her company to her habitation."

She was then the proudest and vainest woman in Haiti, for when she met her red-skinned sisters, who had no beads nor jingling hawk bells, and in fact not even clothing on, she displayed her treasures with all the condescension of a queen. After that there was no lack of Indians on the shores to see the great ships go by, or of red men in canoes who flocked about them, desiring to exchange gold for paltry

baubles like beads and bells. The old historians tell us that they came about, paddling, or swimming, with one hand, and holding up nuggets of gold, saying, in their guttural voices, "*chug, chug,*" like so many frogs in a pond, by which they meant that they wished to exchange their gold for hawk bells. One Indian brought a piece of gold weighing several ounces, which he gave a Spaniard for one of these small bells, and then leaped overboard and swam ashore, where he ran as fast as he could, seeming to fear that the Spaniard might feel that he had been cheated and wish to get the bell back again! This bartering, however, mostly took place a few days after the first landing in Haiti, which was on the 6th of December, 1492. As the Spaniards pursued their way eastward, they passed such beautiful bays and harbors, noble headlands, and glorious valleys through which meandered sparkling streams, that their senses were ravished, even their brutal natures softened. One of these fine harbors is now known as Port de Paix, or the Port of Peace; another, which Columbus called Val de Paraiso, or the Vale of Paradise, was probably the deep Bay of Acul, of which he wrote: "I have now been at sea twenty-three years, with scarcely any intermission, and have seen the East and the West; but in all those parts I



Pestle of stone, with carved face.

have never witnessed so much of perfection in harbors as in this."

"Between Hispaniola and Tortuga they met an Indian in a canoe, and admired that, being in a rough sea, it had not swallowed him up. The Admiral inquiring for Cipango, he thought he had meant Cibao, and pointed where it lay, that being the place where most gold was found in that island." It was probably in the Bay of Acul that "the Admiral was informed that the lord of the territory, whom they called the cacique, was coming with about two hundred men to see the ships; and though he was young they carried him in a bier on their shoulders, and he had a tutor and counselors. When he came aboard it was observed with admiration how great respect they paid him, and how gravely he behaved himself. . . . The next day, though the wind was contrary and blew hard, the sea did not swell, by reason of the shelter the island of Tortuga affords that coast. . . . The cacique gave the Admiral a gold girdle and some plates of gold, and the men of the crews traded with the natives for golden grains. . . . The people carried meat, calabashes with water in them, and good bread made of maize, or Indian corn. On Saturday, the 22d of December, the great cacique of the country, who was in reality a king, sent the Admiral a girdle he wore and a mask with ears, tongue, and nose of beaten gold. The girdle was adorned with small fish bones like seed pearls, curiously wrought, four fingers broad. . . . The Indians brought articles of cotton and grains of gold for barter, and above one hundred and twenty canoes came to the ships with

provisions, and earthenware pitchers handsomely made and painted, full of fresh water. They also gave their sort of spice, which they called *axi* [or *aje*, pronounced ah'-hi], and which they put into dishes of water and drank it up, to show it was good."

The name of the great cacique, or king, was Guacanagari (pronounced gwa-can-ahg'ar-i), and as he felt it beneath his dignity to leave his capital, even to welcome such distinguished strangers, he sent a most pressing invitation for Columbus to visit him without delay. The latter was now pretty well convinced that he had at last arrived at or near the region described by Marco Polo as Cipango, as he then wrote in his journal. Indeed, had he not received most substantial evidence already that he was now near the Land of Gold? It was easy to find a resemblance between the two words: Cipango, of the Far East, and Cibao (pronounced see-bah'-o), the gold-producing region of Haiti, or Santo Domingo. No wonder that the imagination of Columbus was now all aflame, and that he lost no time in accepting the royal invitation.

"On Monday, the 24th of December, the Admiral left this harbor [of Acul] to visit Guacanagari, being only four or five leagues [twelve to fifteen miles] distant. Seeing the sea calm he went to bed, for he had not slept for two days and a night."

This is the first recorded instance of neglect on the part of Columbus during the voyage thus far, and it may be ascribed to the peaceful nature of the scenes he had been among the past two weeks and more, the serenity of the air, the gentle people, and

the deceitful calms of the sea channel. At all events, he went to sleep in his cabin, while the crew also, lulled by the same influences, and relieved of the master's watchful eye, allowed their weariness to overcome them. For more than four months, or since



Monsters of the air and deep. (From an old engraving.)

leaving the port of Palos, they had been constantly on the watch. In crossing the Atlantic's broad expanse they feared the great engulfing seas, and toward the end of the ocean voyage the trade winds, always blowing from one direction—from the east—seemed to augur the impossibility of their return to Spain. "For," they reasoned, "if we get to the bottom of this watery mountain, with the wind blowing against us (the earth being round, according to Co-

lumbus), how shall we ever climb it again on the homeward voyage?" Then, again, they had feared the terrible sea serpents and the mermaids, the submarine monsters, and the dragons on shores new to them; for they were coasting an altogether unknown land, which was, in their imaginations, filled with evil things of every sort.

But now the seas were calm, and the adjacent shores were shining with the beauty of a terrestrial paradise. Now the crews threw away their fears; they were certain that the end of their long and dangerous voyaging was nearly reached, for wherever the hitherto elusive gold should be found, there Columbus had promised to stop and rest.

Now that the golden country was almost within sight, the fears of these superstitious mariners were allayed, and they gave themselves over to a sense of security which the condition of seas and currents by no means warranted. Never, in fact, had they needed more to keep awake and a good watch out ahead, for that very night, after leaving Acul, as the flagship and the caravel drifted over the glassy sea within sight of land, the helm of the former in sole charge of a boy, the evil spirits of the deep combined to bring them disaster. The winds off shore were but balmy zephyrs, laden with sweet odors of the tropic woods, and there was no intimation of the fate in store for these weary mariners from Spain. But while they were wrapped in slumber the treacherous sea currents, for which this coast is noted now, forced the Santa Maria upon a coral reef covered with sand, and there she stuck, to the terror of the hap-

less boy in charge of the helm, and of the suddenly awakened crew. This is the only mention at all of a boy being with Columbus on this voyage, and I am sorry to say it is the last; but, at all events, if the first disaster to a European ship in the New World came about through the negligence of a boy, it was while he was trying bravely to do a man's work; and my sympathies have always gone out to him.

Well, of course Columbus—who, being a sailor, was a light sleeper—at once darted out of his cabin and berated the mariners; he ordered them to lighten the ship by throwing overboard everything on deck, and as this did not have effect, to cut away the masts. Finally a boat's crew was sent out to carry an anchor to windward, and the little *Niña* (“*Niña*” meaning a girl, you know) came to the rescue of the great mother ship and hovered about anxiously till morning. She lay by till daylight, rendering all the assistance possible, but when dawn appeared it was seen that the *Santa Maria* would soon fall to pieces and prove a total wreck. The third caravel of this historic squadron, the *Pinta*, you will remember, had left the others at the eastern end of Cuba and gone off, no one knew whither, on a cruise by herself; so into the smallest vessel of the fleet it would now be necessary to crowd the crews of both the flagship and the little caravel.

But succor came from a source which, to say the least, seemed to Columbus rather dubious, though he had at the outset dispatched a messenger for relief. The man who so gallantly came to the rescue in this time of direst need was none other than



Cacique Guacanagari; and I hope this fact will be remembered, for it will serve to bring into strong relief, a little later on, the black ingratitude of these same Spaniards. When the flagship struck on the reef she was less than six miles from Guarico (gwa'-ri-co), the seat of King Guacanagari's court, and which I have ascertained to be near and on the shore of the bay at present called Cape Haitien. Appealed to by the messenger of Columbus, the cacique promptly sent out a fleet of canoes, and so zealous and industrious were his Indian subjects that every article on the ship was soon carried ashore, the wreck dismantled and the wreckage also sent to Guarico. These details have been pre-



The Santa Maria.

served through the accounts given by Columbus and by local traditions, and can be relied upon as accurate. And thus it came about that, perforce, Columbus, as the guest of an Indian king, celebrated the first Christmas ever observed in the New World. It was on Monday evening that he set out to visit the cacique, and shortly after midnight that the ship ran aground. Christmas fell on a Tuesday the year in which America was discovered by Columbus; the morn had dawned and the day was well begun—probably it was by that time midday—and the wreckage of the Santa Maria

was ashore at Guarico, before the Admiral could bring himself to leave his ill-fated craft. Then he was carried in a canoe to the Indian village, where the cacique received him with deepest sympathy, even shedding tears, it is said, over his mishaps, and placed all he had at his disposal.

It was here, at Guarico, that the bartering of trinkets for gold was carried on with such profit to the Spaniards; for, though the Indians had all their wreckage and merchandise in their possession and care, every article of which was incomparably precious in their estimation, yet they scorned to appropriate a single thing. Their honesty was thus well proved, and it is no matter of wonder that Columbus declared them and their king to be pre-eminent in virtue, and the finest people he had ever met.

Not quite content with giving them shelter and succor, King Guacanagari ordered a great feast prepared, after the Niña had been taken to an anchorage abreast the town, at which there were served a great variety of native fruits, vegetables, fish, and game. After this banquet, at which the visitors were served by Indian maidens, modest and desirous to please, the cacique cleansed his hands by rubbing them with fragrant herbs, after the manner of King Montezuma of Mexico, who was taken prisoner by Hernan Cortes twenty-four years later. He wore, it is stated, a golden coronet, which he gave to Columbus when the latter admired it, his example being followed by two of his subchiefs from the hills, who were likewise adorned. They did not seem to care for clothing, but when presented by the Admiral with

a shirt and a pair of gloves King Guacanagari felt such a thrill of pride as never probably ran through his frame before. When Columbus ordered a Moorish bowman to exhibit his skill, and a lombard to be fired, his astonishment was great, and his thousand attendants fell to the ground filled with a fear that nearly stunned them, for they had never before witnessed such execution nor heard such terrible sounds, save when the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled among the hills.

## CHAPTER V

### FRUITS OF THE FIRST VOYAGE

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1492, at its dawning, had seen the Spaniards at the mercy of the wind and waves, at noon the honored guests of Cacique Guacanagari, at night refreshed and comforted.

New Year's Day, 1493, found these same men recovered, in a measure, from their great disaster, and ready for departure. Finding that the one small caravel remaining could not carry all his crew back to Spain, and being importuned by many of his men for permission to stay in this land of gold and charms innumerable, Columbus resolved to build here a fort and leave a garrison, to hold the place and seek for gold, while he should continue on the homeward voyage. And so expeditious were these eager Spaniards—some to free themselves from his restraint, and the rest to get away—that scarce a week sufficed for the construction of the fort out of the wreckage of the *Santa Maria*. From the planks and timbers of the flagship a small but strong structure was built, with the aid of the natives, having a deep vault beneath and surrounded by a ditch. It was called *La Navidad*, or *The Nativity*, in honor and remembrance of the day on which the wreck occurred, and placed in charge of Captain Arana, a relative of

the deceased wife of Columbus, with a garrison of forty men. This fort was destroyed and the garrison massacred before the return of Columbus on his second voyage to America; but its site, though for centuries forgotten, has at last been approximately determined. The Admiral, as has been already pointed out, kept a daily record of his adventures, which was accurate to a fault. After leaving Cuba, the points he visited and where any important events took place are plainly indicated. Thus in 1892, just four centuries after he had been here, I myself was enabled to identify the spot called La Navidad; and, further, to collect some relics of the wreck and fort. It may seem almost incredible, perhaps, that one should be able to recover anything of importance from a wreck that took place more than four hundred years ago; but it was my good fortune to find what, beyond any reasonable doubt, was an anchor from the Santa Maria, which had been sent ashore with other wreckage and left at Guarico. We have it on the authority of Columbus himself, that everything portable on the ship was taken off by the friendly Indians and landed at the Indian village, even to the last nail and bolt of the stranded vessel. This ancient anchor, then, was found by me, identified, and later sent to the Columbian Exposition, where, in the "monastery of La Rábida," it was placed on exhibition—one of the most precious relics of the many contained in that interesting reproduction of the famous structure.

I allude to this discovery merely to link the remote past with the present, and to make as vivid



A portrait of Columbus.

as possible the events of the time we are investigating. I wish it were possible for me to declare that I had found some living descendant of those gentle, generous people who so royally entertained the perfidious Spaniards; but to-day, alas! not one survives. Where those guileless Indians danced and sang, spread rural feasts, and played their innocent games, to-day a people of darker hue, whose ancestors were brought here as slaves from Africa, and who are scarcely more civilized than those Indians whom they have supplanted, hold possession of the soil.

A few days after the fort was finished, or on the 4th of January, 1493, the diminutive Niña set sail from Guarico, leaving the simple natives staring after her, and in the fort itself and on the shore the forty Spaniards who were to await there the return of Columbus, in accordance with his promise. Her next halt was at the base of a high, tent-shaped mountain, which Columbus named Monte Cristi, and near which disembogued a river, at whose mouth the water casks were filled. This stream Columbus named the Rio del Oro, or River of Gold, because its sands contained glittering particles which clung to the hoops of the casks as the sailors were rolling them in the water. Some have thought that these particles were not in reality gold, but the subsequent finding of that precious metal in great abundance in its mountain tributaries makes it probable that the sands of the river were actually golden. The Spaniards had collected a large quantity of gold from Guacanagari and other Indians, and the signs were so favorable that Columbus really expected to find that by the time he

should return to La Navidad the garrison he left there would have accumulated at least a ton of grains and nuggets.

It was at the mouth of the Rio del Oro, or Yaqui, as it is now called, that the sailors were frightened at sight of a manatee, but soothed by the explanation of their commander that it was probably a mermaid. An account is given of such an animal, a manatee or mermaid, which was kept by one of the Haitian caciques in a small pond, and which frequently swam about with several children on its back. It was called Matoorun, and on hearing its name pronounced would crawl out of the water to the hut of the cacique; but having been struck with a stick at one time by a Spaniard it would never after come out of its pond when anybody with clothes on was in sight, its friends, the natives, being naked.

Stories like this were much in vogue immediately after the first voyage to America, and in the engravings of that period many a great sea monster never seen by man was represented. Some of these leviathans, indeed, were shown as tamed by the holy men sent out from Spain, and swimming about with them on their backs.

A sight that gladdened all eyes, in the Bay of Monte Cristi, was the long-absent Pinta sailing toward her sister caravel, commanded by Martin Alonso Pinzon, whose brother, Vicente Yañez, was captain of the Niña. Columbus was very wroth with Martin Alonso for sailing off contrary to his orders, but they patched up a truce until old Spain was reached, when the latter was so roughly treated,



both by the Admiral and King Ferdinand, that he died soon after his arrival. However, though we might wish to dilate upon the character of Columbus, especially his pettiness and spites, we must not linger by the way, but hasten on with him to the end of his voyage. A readjustment of the crowded crews was made, information exchanged, vessels put in trim for the long cruise, and then the two reunited caravels sailed together along the north coast of Hispaniola.

They ran across great sea turtles "as big as bucklers," sailed past a coast verdurous and fascinating, "level and beautiful," says Columbus, "with tall mountains in the interior reminding me of the sierras of Cordova; and the whole abounding in streams, and offering views of such variety, that the thousandth part can not be described." So charmed was he with this portion of the coast that he returned to it in the latter part of that year and founded there the first city in the New World. Cruising in company, the caravels passed by a high mountain with a cloud-wreathed summit, from the silver-white appearance of which Columbus called the natural harbor at its foot Puerto Plata, or the Silver Port, around which to-day is gathered a pretty settlement. Beyond this port, to the eastward, the caravels discovered and entered the great Bay of Samaná, in a cove of which, not far from its outermost cape, occurred the first encounter with the natives, when the first blood was shed. These natives may have been a band of predatory Caribs, the cannibals of the southern islands, for they were far more warlike than any yet seen, and they were on the alert against surprise and

capture. Columbus had taken several of the other Indians with him as captives to adorn his triumph in Spain, and fain would have made prisoners some of these; but they sternly repelled him and his crews, sending a flight of arrows among them as they landed. This landing at the Bay of Arrows, as Columbus called it, was the last the Spaniards made on this voyage. Thence they sailed away, intending to seek the mythical island of the Amazons, of which they had been told, but soon shifted their course for the homeward voyage to Spain. By so doing they pass beyond our view, since we are inquiring into their doings in America and not in the Old World. Readers of history know of the turbulent passage home, of the eventual arrival at Palos, the triumphal march across Spain to Barcelona, and the adulation poured upon the successful Admiral, then at the zenith of his fame.

In reviewing this first voyage of Columbus to America, the scenes identified with which we have described, it occurs to me that there were many minor discoveries of importance besides the "discovery" of the New World. We all know, of course, that it has been denied, in fact, that he was the first to make this "discovery"; but we are not going to discuss the voyages of the Norsemen to America. It is enough for us to know that they did not make their discoveries known, while Columbus awoke the dormant energies of all Europe, and was in the van of that movement by which the American continents were not only explored but colonized. Doubtless

some one else would soon have sailed a similar course to his; and it has always been a matter of regret to those who have had the cause of humanity at heart that the French or English did not discover and civilize those natives of the New World, rather than the Spaniards.

However, passing by these great questions, let us inquire into the nature of those minor findings of the first voyage. In the first place, the variation of the compass attracted the attention of Columbus and caused him great uneasiness; then, as he proceeded, the increasing strength of the trade winds, constantly blowing from the east and northeast; after that the vast weedy expanse of the Sargasso Sea, with its floating seaweed bearing globules like small grapes, whence the name. Strange birds appeared at intervals on the voyage, increasing in number as land was approached, like the gulls, sea swallows, the tropic bird (*Phaethon æthereus*), the petrels, and perhaps stray humming birds. When land was reached a host of novel objects burst upon his astonished and delighted senses. First the island itself, different from any other segment of land he had ever seen; then the inhabitants, with their copper-colored skins, their nudity and innocence, their stone implements (though similar articles were wrought by the stone-age peoples of Europe, it must be confessed), their crude pottery and ornaments, and above all the *canoas*. It was from the aboriginal name of these dugouts that the word "canoe" was derived. In a letter written at Lisbon in 1493 Columbus says: "In every one of these islands there are great num-

bers of canoas, each one made from a solid log, of a narrow shape, somewhat resembling our *fustas*, but swifter in the water. They are navigated solely by oars [paddles], and are of different sizes, most of them containing seats for eighteen rowers. I saw some of them with seventy or eighty rowers; and with these they carry on a commerce among the islands, which are innumerable."

The second island they visited in the Bahamas "appeared to abound in game, having many meadows and groves and some agreeable hills, with an infinite variety of birds that sang sweetly and flew in flocks, most of them different from what Spain affords."

"There were also many lakes [lagoons], and near one of them they saw a creature like a crocodile, seven feet long, and they throwing stones at him he ran into the water, where they killed him with their spears, admiring his largeness and frightful shape. But time afterward made it appear that those animals, being scaled and flayed, are good meat, the flesh thereof being white and most valued by the Indians; and in the island of Hispaniola they call them *yranes* [iguanas]. They also saw fishes of fine colors; but no land creatures appeared except large and tame snakes and parrots, and a sort of little rabbits shaped like mice but bigger, which they called *utias*." \*

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\* It is a most interesting fact that a new species of this ratlike animal, the *utia*, was discovered in 1891 on the Plana Keys, Bahamas. It is called the *Capromys Ingrahami*. Having long been regarded as extinct in the Bahamas, this rediscovery of the *Capromys*, or *utia*, is looked upon as an event of importance. It is

The Haitian Indians had also a small animal called the *curi*, or *agouti* (*Dasyprocta agouti*), which was sometimes served up at their repasts; but they had no large domesticated animals, and no beasts of burden of any sort.

Many words also were added to our language after this first voyage, and many more were obtained in Mexico: such as *yucca*, and the *manioc*, from which the *cassava*, the Indian meal, was obtained; *mayz*, or Indian corn, to which we are indebted for both the word and the grain, of inestimable value to the world at large; the *anana*, or pineapple, and several other delicious fruits not common in the North; *caoba*, or mahogany, *hamaca*, or hammock; *tabaco*, *cacao*, etc. The native name for a hut was *bohio*, meaning one common in the people; but a frail shelter, such as the writer has many times slept beneath in the tropical forests of the West Indies, was an *ajoupa*, a word worthy of adoption into our language, as it would be very serviceable.

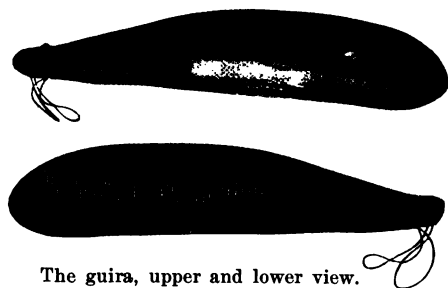
Their king was called a *cazique*, or *cacique*; their little gods, made of clay and carved from stone, were *zemes*; the Supreme Being was known as *Turey*. Not far from Cape Haitien there is a great cave from which, the natives fabled, issued the first pair of creatures in human shape that ever lived on the island. Their priests (when they had any) were called *butíos*, their national songs *areitos* (ah-ray-é-etos); their dances, or *diumbas*, they executed to the

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not much larger than a guinea pig, but the *utia* of Cuba is sometimes found two feet in length, and of twelve pounds' weight.

music of *cayumbas* and *guiras* (pronounced whé-ras), which primitive instruments are in use to-day, the last-named being merely a long gourd with scarified surface, to evoke "music" from which a slender stick is rubbed against it briskly.

From these few citations it will be seen that these ignorant natives of the islands, discovered on that first voyage to America, though they went about unclothed, yet had a name for everything expressive of its use or nature; and, what is more, have contributed somewhat to the enrichment of our own vocabulary.



The guira, upper and lower view.

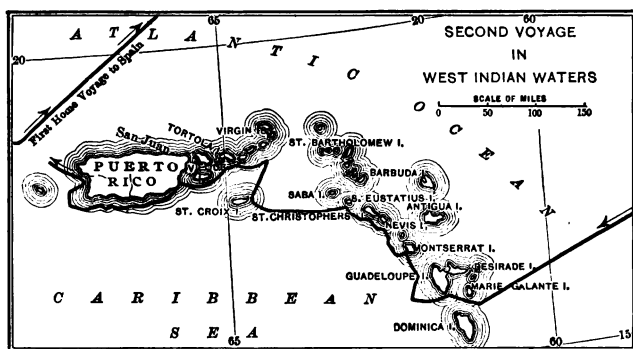
## CHAPTER VI

### THE CANNIBAL CARIBS

IN the preceding chapters I have described at some length the first voyage of Columbus to the New World because it was so prolific in strange adventures, and resulted in so many new things the existence of which had not even been suspected by the learned of the Old World. But his second voyage, on which he started the 25th of September, 1493, I shall use (to adapt a well-worn simile) merely as a golden thread on which to string the pearls of adventure. In the *Life and Voyages of Columbus*, by Washington Irving, may be found all details pertaining to his personality. My aim is to make appear real and vivid the scenes not only of his cruising and adventures, but those of others who followed after him—in their way equally interesting.

With a fleet of fourteen caravels and three large caracks containing nearly twelve hundred sailors, soldiers, cavaliers, priests, monks, and everything necessary for successfully planting a colony in the islands he had found, he left the harbor of Cadiz and embarked on the waters of the deep. Sailing a course more southerly than on the first voyage, he finally sighted land, the second day of November, about midway the chain of islands now known as the

Lesser Antilles. This crescent-shaped archipelago extends from Puerto Rico to the north coast of South America, describing the arc of a circle, and has been fancifully called "the Bow of Ulysses." The individual isles and islets composing this chain are in



The second voyage, 1493.

striking contrast with those of the Bahamas, being for the most part detached mountain masses, isolated peaks, and volcanic cones thrust up from the depths of old Ocean. In fact, it has been conjectured that they present the remains of a submerged continent, sunk in some great cataclysm—all but the summits of its highest mountains—and perhaps of that lost Atlantis respecting which the early philosophers speculated and the poets often wrote and sang. Whether or no they at one time united the two continents of North and South America is a question as yet undetermined. Scientific investigations, such as deep-sea soundings and a study of their flora and



fauna, seem to confirm this theory; but (as some of my own contributions toward the solution of this problem have shown) if they were at one time in union with the continents, it was long ages ago—perhaps æons. For one thing, each island has its own species of plant and animal, as well as others common to all; there are great parrots in Dominica that are not found in Guadeloupe, and again a species of the same genus in Martinique not seen in Dominica, only thirty miles away.

But if we allow ourselves to embark on the sea of speculation we shall, I fear, sail about aimlessly without making solid land. So let us cling to the main matters of discussion, and for the moment follow after Columbus, as he approaches the first land he sighted on this second voyage.

He named it Dominica, on account, the historians say, of having first seen it on Sunday; and as “Sabbath Island”—gloriously beautiful, distinctive from the common run of islands, even as Sunday stands apart from the average week day—I recall my own first glimpse of it, when, like Columbus, I saw it rising, a vision of loveliness, from the blue Caribbean Sea. Such an island appeared to Columbus as he approached the Atlantic coast of Dominica, where the seas ran too high for him to land, however; and such, though smaller, was Marie Galante, and yet another larger isle, which he named Guadalupe. In a bay of the last-named he cast anchor and sent a boat ashore to investigate. The coast was picturesque, the forests were vast and fragrant with sweet odors; but at the outset the Spaniards made a

discovery that caused them to hesitate in their proposed exploration of the island: no less than that the inhabitants of this beautiful island were cannibals.

Columbus had been somewhat prepared to find a fiercer and more warlike people than those he met in Cuba and Haiti; in truth, it was to seek them that he had on this voyage sailed in a more southerly direction, having been informed that their homes were here. But it does not appear that he had understood they were *anthropophagi*—"eaters of human flesh"; and when his men reported that they had found huts ashore with fires over which human limbs and pieces of flesh were cooking, he was as astonished as he was disgusted. I have always had some doubts about the truth of this story, for the Spaniards had their own reasons for giving the Caribs a bad name. Somewhat later they gave the newcomers so much trouble that they had to leave them entirely alone, and the Spaniards made their alleged cannibal propensities a cloak for hunting them down like beasts and selling them into slavery. But still, they may have been cannibals; and of one thing we are certain: that from them we have derived the term "*canniba*, an aboriginal word meaning *man-eater*," says an old writer. "And finding in *canniba* the word *can* [Khan], Columbus was of the opinion that these pretended man-eaters were in reality merely subjects of the Great Khan of Cathay, who for a long time had been scanning these seas in search of slaves." Thus we see how a preconceived theory may lead one astray; for Columbus, to the end of his days, was always seeking in America for the Grand Khan he had

imagined ought to be there, assuming, of course, that the lands he had discovered were the outlying possessions of that Oriental potentate.

Whatever may have been the conclusions of Columbus, this discovery furnished the wise men of that period material for many learned discussions as to the origin of those people, the Caribs, who called themselves *Callina*, or *Carina*, which signified valiant and brave in war. It resulted, as I have said, in the addition of a new word to our vocabulary; and for this much we are debtors to the Caribs. They were less advanced, perhaps, than the natives of the larger islands in the primitive arts of peace, but more inured to war, braver, and less inclined to submit to Spanish rule.

Luckily for Columbus and his crews, all the men were away when that Carib village was invaded on the island of Guadeloupe, else he and his might have met with a reception not altogether to their liking. Some women appeared, however, and they gave a very good account of themselves in the use of the bow and arrow; notwithstanding which a few were captured and taken to the ships. A party of soldiers wandered off into the forest and were lost for several days, but finally returned with glowing accounts of the wonders they had seen. They could see from the ships a great waterfall, descending like a shower of feathery arrows from the clouds, and the forest aisles were vocal with the songs of birds.

The natives of the Bahamas, Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico were so different from these warlike Caribs that even the obtuse, gold-seeking

Spaniards noticed the distinction. The first-named were called Arauacks, or Arawaks: mild-mannered,



The waterfall (Guadeloupe).

gentle, always disposed for peace; the Caribs were their opposites in every respect, being, though "In-

dians" like themselves, radically different in their mode of life and pursuits, savage and aggressive, maritime and nomadic. Their origin is yet inwrapped in mystery, but probably they had come from the north coast of South America, having exterminated their predecessors in the Lesser Antilles. At the time the Spaniards arrived they had extended the scene of their warlike operations as far as Haiti, where the natives were in constant dread of their visits.

At the time to which I refer, or in the last decade of the fifteenth century, the area occupied or controlled by the Caribs in the West Indies extended, roughly speaking, from 10° to 20° north latitude, or from Trinidad, near the mouth of the Orinoco, to Hispaniola. Their original home was probably in the northern part of South America, from the river Amazon to Venezuela, Caribs being still found in a state of savagery in the Guianas. The Spaniards have left but scant material for an estimate of these people; but preferably from a quaint book called the History of the Caribby Islands, published in England more than two hundred years ago, we may learn much of their appearance. The English author says: "They go about stark naked—all alike, men, women, and children; though the Christians have conversed very much among them, yet have all their persuasions to induce them to cover themselves been to no purpose. . . . And they change the natural color of their bodies by dyeing them with *roucou* [extracted from the seeds of the annotto, the *Bixa orellana*], which makes them

of a red color all over. They also adorn the head with a little covering of birds' feathers of different colors, and bore their ears, lips, and nose for the insertion of ornaments. About their necks they wear necklaces made of the bones of their enemies, of the teeth of alligators, agoutis, etc. On great occasions they wear scarfs and girdles of feathers. . . . Their most valued ornaments were gorgets of copper,



A Carib girl.  
(From a photograph.)

obtained from the Arawaks by plunder, crescent-shaped and shining, and these are most frequently the only possessions they leave their children when they die. They sometimes wear cotton cloth as breech clouts and aprons, and can dye it in various colors, chiefly red, and they had hammocks when discovered by Columbus. They also made fine pottery, which they baked in kilns, and wove fine baskets. They cultivated

their lands in common. . . . They buried the corpse of a chief, or the head of a family, in the center of his own dwelling, and then abandoned it forever. . . . Their heaven, or future home, seems to have been a sort of Mahometan paradise of houris and harems for the brave men; and they

raised rustic altars, placing upon them fruits and flowers.

“They believe that they have as many souls as they can feel beatings of the arteries in their bodies besides the principal one, which is in their heart, and goes to heaven with its god, who carries it thither to live with other gods; and they imagine that they live there the same life as man lives here below. For they do not think the soul to be so far immaterial as to be invisible; but they affirm it to be subtile and of thin substance, as a purified body; and they have but the same word to signify the heart and the soul. Other souls, not in the heart, reside in the forest and by the seashore; the former they call *mabouyas*, the latter *oumekou*. They believe that after death they may go to live in certain fortunate islands, where they will have Arawak slaves to serve them, swim unwearied in placid streams, and eat of delicious fruits. . . . It is related that a certain young Carib, having been converted to Christianity and taken to France, where he was shown many strange things at which he showed no astonishment, when he returned to his tribe threw off the clothes of civilization and painted his body with *roucou*, becoming as wild and savage as before.” \*

“Of the thunder, which they call ‘God’s voice,’ they are extremely afraid, and they are prone to leave their houses [or huts] after the death of an

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\* In this respect that young Carib was not singular, for the same disposition is manifested by many of our North American Indians as have been wholly or partly civilized, even some of those who have graduated with honors at the Indian schools.

inmate. As to division of labor, the men make the huts and keep them in repair, procure fish and game, and some of them also labor in the fields; but the women attend to the domestic duties, paint their husbands with *roucou*, spin the cotton yarn, weave hammocks, etc. They made fire by the friction of two sticks, and also made and carried at night torches of gum or candle wood."

This author mentions a peculiar fact, which I also noted when I was living with the descendants of the Caribs, and that is: "The Caribs have an ancient and natural language, such as is peculiar to them, and also a bastard speech, with foreign words, chiefly Spanish, intermixed. Among themselves they always use the natural, but in conversing with Christians the corrupt speech. The women also have a different speech from the men." This is accounted for by a barbarous fact. When the ancient Caribs came here from the south, they came as conquerors, and killed every adult male Arawak who fell into their hands. But they preserved the women and children, and thus the Arawak speech, or a trace of it, is yet to be found among the Caribs of to-day.

"It hath been observed," continues our author, "that both men and women are naturally chaste, and when those of other nations gaze curiously at them, and laugh at their nakedness, they are wont to say to them, 'You are to look on us only between the eyes.'" Here we see an innocence as natural and as free from guile as that of our first parents in Paradise.

I can testify to the truth of his statement that



"the Caribs are great lovers of cleanliness, bathing every day, and are generous, hospitable, and honest." But as to the accuracy of the following I can not affirm: "It is also a manifest truth, confirmed by daily experience in America, that the holy sacrament of baptism having been conferred on these savages, the devil never beats nor torments them afterward as long as they live."

As to the training of the young warriors: "The Carib boys were compelled to pierce their food, suspended from a tree, with an arrow before they were allowed to eat it. . . . They are said to have used poisoned arrows [probably dipping them in the *curari* poison, for the preparation of which see Waterton's Wanderings in Guiana]. Like many other natives of America, they eradicate the beard and the hair on other parts of the body, and the hatred of the Arawaks, their hereditary enemies, was instilled. Their cabins were built of poles fixed circularly in the ground, drawn together at the top and covered with palm leaves, and in the center of each village was a building larger than the others for public assemblages. . . . The Caribbeans are a handsome, well-shaped people, of middle stature and smiling countenance, having broad shoulders and hips, and most of them are in good plight. Their mouths are not over large, and their teeth are perfectly white and close set. True it is their complexion is of an olive color naturally; their noses are flat, and their foreheads formed not naturally, but by artifice, for the mothers crush them down [artificially compress them] soon after birth, as also during the

time they are nursing, imagining it a kind of beauty and perfection. . . . They have large and thick feet because they go barefoot, and withal so hard that they defy woods, rocks, and thorns. They believed in evil spirits, and sought to propitiate them by presents of game, fruits, etc."

All this I have quoted from the author mentioned, because his observations were made when the Caribs were living more nearly in a state of nature than at the present time. In British Guiana, according to an explorer who made of them a special study, the Caribs yet live in a state of savagery similar to that of the primitive dwellers in the Lesser Antilles, and still practice the same customs.

If this book were merely a narrative of my adventures, I should like to linger by the way and tell of my own experiences among the Caribs of the present day; but as we are bent upon historical investigations I can hardly allow myself that privilege. I was young then, and vigorous, seeking adventure not only for its own sake, but for the information it might casually bring to me; and you may be sure that the pleasures of that wild life were enhanced by the consciousness that I was garnering valuable historical and ethnological material. For example, soon after I had swung my hammock in the little straw-thatched hut, on the windward coast of Dominica, I was served with "farine" made from the *manioc* and roasted ears of the maize, exactly as the first Spaniards in these islands were served—in the real aboriginal fashion. My Indian guide, Meeyong, whose ancestors were pure Caribs, and may have been among those who

gazed with wondering eyes upon the great, white-sailed caracks of the Spaniards as they sailed slowly by in 1493, took me to interview the oldest woman of the tribe, almost the sole survivor of those who



A Carib cookhouse (Dominica).

spoke the original tongue, and also went with me into the woods. We climbed the forest-covered mountains in search of the great *ciceroo*, or broad-winged parrot, and at night the guide deftly constructed a palm-leaf *ajoupa*, as he had been taught by his

father and grandfather, and wove Carib baskets of reeds, so well made that they would hold water. He showed me the haunts of the birds, the lizards, and the fat grubs of the palm beetle, which last he roasted and ate with great relish, and wove a *mata-pie*, or long, conical basket, in which the grated manioc was pressed, the poisonous juice extracted, and the meal made ready for baking over a fire into palatable cakes.\* The game we shot he *boucanned* over a smoking flame of gum wood, after the manner of the ancient Caribs—which process gave that distinctive name to the far-famed buccaneers (or *boucaniers*).

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\* The Carib, by the way, was the inventor of the cassareep, which forms the basis of the famous West Indian pepper pot, that concoction sought by all gourmets in the tropics. The juice of the cassava is evaporated until the poisonous quality is driven out, when it becomes an antiseptic capable of preserving meats of every kind for a long period. This is placed in a big jar or earthen pot, and into it are thrown odds and ends of meat from time to time, which the juice of the manioc preserves, and to which it imparts a peculiar and agreeable flavor.

## CHAPTER VII

### FIRST FORTS AND SETTLEMENTS

BEFORE we follow Columbus further on his second voyage, let us complete our sketch of these Caribs, whose discovery was the most important of his contributions to the fund of knowledge at that time. They are also the only tribe or body of Indians in the West Indies whose descendants exist to-day, and are confined to but two islands of the archipelago in which, at the time of their discovery, they roamed at large. These islands are Dominica, in 15° north latitude, and Saint Vincent, two degrees farther south, which together contain perhaps five hundred Indians, many of whom are so intimately mixed with the negroes that their distinguishing racial features are nearly obliterated. They dwell on the windward, or east coast, of each island, in a territory set apart, where they cultivate their lands in common, subsisting mainly upon the fruits of their agricultural labors and sea products, eked out by the scant results of the chase, such as small birds, agoutis, and iguanas. Their huts are almost as primitive in construction as they were four hundred years ago, being built of palm logs and thatched with leaves from the same tree.

These are the last vestiges of the Indians brought to the light of civilization by Columbus. But even were there no living subjects for us to view, we



Old Indians of Dominica.

could still adduce evidence that they once existed here from the relics they have left behind. The most important of these are some rude rock carvings, or petroglyphs, which I have seen in various islands, such as Saint John (one of the Virgin group), Saint Vincent, and Guadeloupe. The characters do not rise to the dignity of hieroglyphics or ideographs, and have no coherence or continuity, like the pictographs

of the Aztecs and other Mexican Indians, but are merely the chance work of some barbaric artist. I may remark, in passing, that in the West Indies there are no ruins of great structures the work of aborigines, such as are seen in Mexico, and no remains to indicate that the Indians here were far advanced in culture.

In addition to the rock carvings, implements of war and agriculture are found throughout the islands. These are all of stone, belonging mainly to that period of barbaric culture known as the neolithic, and consist of semilunar and crescentic "banner stones," axes with and without notched heads, hoes, gouges, spear and arrow heads, some of jadeite and serpentine, most beautifully polished. These have been found in many places, in forests and on the beaches, just where they were dropped by their original possessors. One of the most remarkable collections of stone implements ever found was that discovered in St. Vincent, about 1890. Some Carib warriors had buried them hundreds of years ago, and by accident they were brought to light—two hundred implements of war. In this aboriginal armory were found great battle-axes such as a giant would have used, some of them weighing more than six pounds each and measuring ten inches across. They show us what strong and valiant men were the warriors of those days, who roamed the islands and crossed the Caribbean Sea in their canoes.

That was very pleasant sailing—the cruise of Columbus from Guadalupe northwesterly through the emerald chain of the Caribbees, every morning parting from a sheltered harbor: every noon bringing to view a cloud-capped, verdure-covered mountain, and every night dropping anchor in a haven silver-stranded and sweet with the perfumes wafted from virgin forests ashore. The calm waters of deep

bays mirrored the caravels and caracks as they stole past gloomy headlands; swallow-shaped flying fishes skimmed the waves, and fell, perchance, into the boats drifting astern the larger vessels; flocks of parrots flew screaming overhead, sweet-voiced songsters warbled in the thickets near the beaches, and those airy sprites, the humming birds, glanced athwart the



A Carib canoe.

sky. Ah! those were Edenic islands that the Spaniards brought to view one after another, fit abodes for man in his best estate; yet they were then given over to fierce Carib prowlers, soon to be supplanted by yet more fiendish Spaniards, whose atrocities were to convert these paradisaical retreats into a wilderness of woe.

At this time, however, the evil spirits which soon after desolated the islands had not been let loose.



It was with feelings of mingled thankfulness and reverence that Columbus visited and named the islands as they came within the range of vision, and to-day those names still remain, most of them being Spanish. Thus Guadalupe (or Guadeloupe, as the French, its present owners, call it) was named after a famous monastery in Spain; Montserrat, after another; Saint Christophers was so named, it is said, because the peak of its central mountain (now known as Mount Misery) reminded the Admiral of the good giant who bore the infant Jesus on his shoulders; Antigua was the name of a city of Andalusia; Santa Cruz, the Holy Cross; that group of islands north of it he called the Virgins, after Saint Ursula and her eleven thousand followers; Saint Thomas and Saint John also retain their original appellations as bestowed by Columbus; finally, the island lying to the west of them, known to the natives as Borinquen, he named San Juan de Puerto Rico, or Saint John of the Rich Port, because the harbor in which he stopped to water his vessels was so rich in natural beauties and prospective wealth. This harbor is the one now known as Aguadilla, or the Watering Place, in honor of that event, and lies at the west end of the island; from it Columbus sailed directly across the channel to Hispaniola, discovered on the previous voyage, and where he had left the small garrison at La Navidad.

Skimming along the north coast of Hispaniola hurriedly, passing successively the Bay of Arrows, the Silver Mountain, and Monte Cristi, the fleet at last arrived opposite the site of La Navidad. It was

night, but Columbus sent a boat ashore, for he was apprehensive of some evil tidings. In truth he had good cause to be, for the day before some of his men in a small boat had found the decaying remains of two men, apparently Europeans, in a grassy bay near Monte Cristi. On the morrow, indeed, his worst fears were more than realized, for it was then learned that the garrison had been massacred and the fort razed to the ground. This was the gloomy ending to that voyage which hitherto had been so bright with signs of promise—an ending, indeed, which presaged yet greater disappointments in the terrible disasters which swiftly followed. Search was made for Cacique Guacanagari, but it was only after long waiting that he finally appeared: wounded, ill, depressed, yet still the avowed friend of the Spaniards. We shall pass over, for the moment, the events that led to the death of this unhappy chieftain, the dispersion and eventual extinction of his people, and hasten on to the founding of Isabella, early in December, 1493.

Columbus was anxious to reimburse his sovereigns for their great outlay, and allowed himself to be carried away by the prospect of quickly acquiring the necessary means through the exploitation of the mines. Having ever in mind the contiguity of the first city to the Cibao, or gold region, he scanned the coast to the east of Monte Cristi for an advantageous site, and when he discovered a deep basin the vessels were brought inside the line of foaming coral reefs upon which the open sea was breaking, and there found shelter. Within this bay



The site of Isabella.

a river discharged its waters, and above the sand beach where it met the sea rose a steep bluff, forming a natural breastwork, from the summit of which stretched level land to a background of hills. East of the bluff is a beach of golden sand, two hundred and seventy-five feet in length, with another coral headland beyond it and a lagoon inland, circular in shape and bordered with logwood and mangroves. It was upon this beach that the weary cavaliers and sailors, the soldiers and future citizens of the colony to be established, were finally disembarked, after their long voyage and suspense. Here, also, the caravels and caracks discharged their freight—the horses, cattle, sheep, munitions of war, provisions, plants for cultivation, and articles for barter.

But to-day, where these scenes transpired there is naught but solitude, for this new city, the first to be founded by Europeans in the New World, was not long occupied. The situation was not salubrious, the surrounding country was unfit for easy cultivation, and the new settlers died in great numbers; yet within two months from the day of landing here a church was dedicated, the ruins of which, fifty years ago, showed it to have been at least one hundred and fifty feet in length; a residence had been built for Columbus, also a fortress with a circular tower, and a mint, or “king’s house,” for the smelting and storing of the gold to be obtained in the hills.

When I visited this spot in 1891 I came from the direction of Puerto Plata, sixty miles away, in a little coasting vessel, called a *goleta*, the master of which, a black man, was in search of logwood and

mahogany. After half a day spent on the deck of the goleta, we sighted the foaming breakers on the reefs off Isabella, and at last penetrated the narrow channel between the coral ledges and gained the mouth of the Bajabonito, the dreariest river I had ever seen. Half a mile from the river mouth we arrived opposite a small dwelling house, which the generous owner, whom I had met at Puerto Plata, had placed at my disposal.

In the morning, when the sun shone upon the forest-covered hillside, and the mocking birds saluted me with floods of melody, I quite forgot the fleas and mosquitoes that had assailed me during the night, the centipedes and scorpions, of which I had been warned, and thrilled with the

thought that the event so long anticipated was near at hand: when I should gaze upon the ruins of the first city erected in America! Abandoned more than four centuries ago, Isabella had lain neglected, deserted, all this time, slowly going to ruin, and even



Armor of Columbus.

its site forgotten by civilized man, until I sought it out and brought it to the notice of my countrymen. Only the explorer can understand the satisfaction with which I neared the site of that deserted city. The air was cool and sweet with the scents of a thousand flowers, the trees were filled with chattering parrots, cooing wood doves, and glancing, gemlike humming birds.

Thus welcomed, and thus attuned with nature's harmonies, I approached the site of ancient Isabella. I found it covered with a rank growth of cactus, logwood, and tropical plants, woven together so closely by long, ropelike lianes, and beset with tangled creepers, that we could hardly penetrate this vegetal barrier, and my guide had to hew a path with his cutlass or *machete*.

In short, of the city of Isabella, which at one time contained numerous houses built of masonry, no vestige remained except shapeless heaps, or *montones*, of rocks, stones, and tiles. I located all the principal structures, and found some hewn rocks which at one time composed the walls. I also picked up many fragments of crucibles that at one time may have held gold from the Cibao region and shards of tiles that once covered the roofs of important buildings. I lived here a week, visiting the ruins by daylight and moonlight, essaying the latter experience in hope that I might meet, perchance, some of those gallant cavaliers whose unhappy fate it was to perish here, and who were said still to haunt this gloomy spot.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LAST CACIQUES

ONE of the finest views offered to the eyes of man is that outspread below the Santo Cerro, or Holy Hill, of Santo Domingo. The Santo Cerro is about six hundred feet in height, and rises sheer above the vast central plain which stretches nearly across the island from east to west, and between the two mountain ranges known as the Cerro de Monte Cristi and the Cordilleras de Cibao. This fertile and extensive plain, beautiful beyond compare, covered with tropical forests and traversed by rivers, was first seen by Columbus in 1494, and called by him the Vega Real, or Royal Plain. Viewing it from the Holy Hill, with its visible charms, which so moved Columbus that he declared it to surpass all other spots he had ever seen, my heart swelled with emotions of gratitude to the Great Creator, who has breathed into all nature the divine element of beauty. Yet I could not but be saddened when I recalled the terrible tragedies that had been enacted here: the murdering of individuals, the massacring of multitudes, and the acts that led to the final extinction of those innocent aborigines who once made their homes beneath the royal palms, and lived here happily until the Spaniard came.

Although it is thought that the great battle of the

Vega took place near the present town of Santiago de los Caballeros, yet it is averred that Colum-



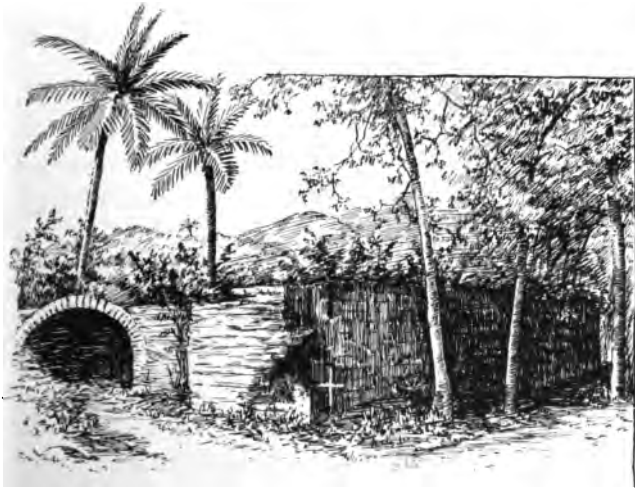
The church of Santo Cerro.

bus himself watched and guided its progress from the crest of this same Santo Cerro; and a very aged tree, pointed out as that beneath which he stood, is called to-day the *nispero de Colon*, or the medlar tree of Columbus. A church of quaint construction crowns the hill, along its narrow ridge is a double line of palm-thatched huts, between which runs a street, and in this miserable hamlet reside a few colored people, who depend upon the church for a living; for the Cerro is a sacred spot, and the inhabitants of the Vega all come here once a year at least, and those resident near the hill every Saturday, to pay their devotions and perform their vows.

The great battle of the Vega, by which the Indians were for a time subdued, took place in the spring of 1495, and soon after Columbus began the construc-



tion of a series of forts reaching from the city of Isabella to the heart of the Royal Plain. The most important of these strongholds was that built near the foot of the Cerro, and called Concepción de la Vega. This was the fifth place of defence built by Columbus in the New World, the first having been La Navidad, the second Isabella, the third Santo Tomas, and the fourth Jacagua, near the present town of Santiago de los Caballeros. Concepción de la Vega was built of brick, with walls from ten to sixteen feet in thickness, having semicircular bastions at their corners,



Fort Concepción de la Vega.

and inclosed a plaza about two hundred feet square. I can give the material and dimensions of this ancient structure with some degree of confidence, as I carried on excavations around its walls and made

extensive explorations all over the Vega. Around the fort erected here grew up a large town, filled with gold and silver smiths, and promising to become a place of influence; but seventy years later, one April morning, fort and town were totally destroyed by a great earthquake, and as trade and commerce had long since left the region the settlement was never renewed. Most of the surviving inhabitants moved to the town of Vega, a few miles distant, and Concepción exists to-day in ruin and solitude. It had a church and a convent or monastery, and to be interred in this latter Columbus willed that his remains should be taken from Spain to Santo Domingo.

The convent has disappeared, and of the church only the bell tower remains, in a ruinous condition. Respecting this bell tower I have a fanciful story, and it is this: To the town of Concepción was brought a bell that King Ferdinand of Spain had sent as a present to the town of Isabella; when the latter was abandoned, it was hung in the belfry at Concepción, and called the people to their devotions. After the earthquake the bell disappeared, for the belfry was ruined. It was finally forgotten; but about a hundred years ago, as a hunter was ranging through the woods about the tower, he saw a strange object clasped in the branches of a wild fig tree. The "fig" of the island is a parasite, growing upon other trees, and sometimes completely wrapping them in ligneous folds. One of these figs had sent its inquisitive feelers in among the bricks and stones of the ruined tower, and in its explorations had come across the old bell, which had been hidden

for centuries. No one knows how long it took the growing tree to lift the bell from its bed and hold it suspended in midair; but that was the object the hunter saw as he looked aloft! He reported his discovery to others, and they cut down the tree, rescued



Bell tower of the church.

the bell from its imprisonment, and ever since have regarded it with peculiar veneration.

Other ancient relics which I obtained at and near Concepción were a small lombard, exploded when it was fired at the Indians, an iron cross, and one of

the veritable *cascabels*, or hawk bells, taken to the island for barter with the Indians. The cascabel figures prominently in the history of the island, for it may be recalled that after the subjugation of Santo Domingo, Columbus ordered every man, woman, and child to bring to him at Isabella at least a hawk bell full of native gold. It was in vain that the cacique of the region plead their inability to do this, and offered instead to sow with maize the entire plain, from sea to sea, for the support of the Spaniards. Columbus was inexorable. Gold was what he and his myrmidons had come for; gold they must have, to send to their grasping king and queen, who, as he explained to the Indians, were possessed of an appetite which could only be appeased by great quantities of the precious metal.

With the building of Fort Concepción in 1495 the last link was forged in the chain by which Columbus held the humbled Indians bound and subject to his will. Whether he really intended it or not, he had prepared the way for their total extinction as a people, after inflicting upon them untold miseries. The *crime of Columbus* we might term this oppression of a subject people and their final extermination, although his policy was subsequently sanctioned by his sovereign, Ferdinand, king of Spain.

When Columbus arrived at Hispaniola the entire island was under the dominion of five great chiefs, or caciques. The first he met, as we have seen, was that humane and generous man, Guacanagari, who not only rescued him and his people from the wreck of the flagship, but royally entertained them

as long as they chose to remain his guests. For the massacre of La Navidad garrison he was not responsible, as that was the act of Caonabo, the fierce Carib chieftain of the mountains; but he was held responsible by many Spaniards, as it occurred on his territory, which extended from Mole San Nicolas to the river Yaqui.

When Columbus returned to La Navidad, on his second voyage, he brought with him some women of Puerto Rico whom he had rescued from the Caribs of Guadalupe. Guacanagari saw and conversed with them, and became enamored of one, whom the Spaniards called Catalina. Whatever the purport of their conversations, it came about that the following night Catalina and her female friends all leaped overboard and swam ashore, as the ships lay in the bay. Some of them were taken captive as they reached the shore, but Catalina and two others escaped to the woods. As Guacanagari did not again appear to the Spaniards, and could not be found in his village, it was concluded that he had fled with his charmer to the mountains. He had, in truth, good cause to beware of the Spaniards, for some of them were for hanging him up at once, as the instigator of the massacre. He again made his appearance soon after the founding of Isabella, and was compelled by Columbus to give proof of his friendship by assisting at a massacre of the Indians in the Vega. After that, overwhelmed by the taunts and reproaches of his countrymen, and driven from his possessions by the Spaniards, he retired to the interior mountains, where he miserably perished.

That was the end of gallant Guacanagari, one who had befriended the Spaniards from the very first, and as reward was hounded to his death. The next cacique the Spaniards met was Guarionex, whose territory extended from the Yaqui, contiguous



Bringing gold to Columbus.

to that of Guacanagari, eastward to the Bay of Samaná, including the great and fertile Vega. It was mainly through his instigation that the Indians were prevailed upon to rise against the Spaniards when they received their first defeat; it was he who made the offer to sow the Vega with maize, in lieu of rendering tribute in gold; and from his tribe came the five hun-

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dred Indians sent home to Spain as slaves by Columbus. The third cacique was Caonabo, the Carib, who pounced upon the fort of Santo Tomas from the heart of his caciquedom, which comprised the mountainous Cibao, so rich in golden treasure. His was a vast province, and his capital was over the mountains, on their southern slopes.

The easternmost province was known as Higüey, and was ruled by a cacique named Cotubanama, who was, like all the others, murdered in due time. The fifth and last province was Xaragua, which comprised the southwestern part of the island, including much of what is to-day known as Haiti along its southern coast, and was governed by Bohechio, brother-in-law of Caonabo.

One of the most romantic adventures even of that age of romance took place in this island soon after the first collision between the Spaniards and the Indians. Among the soldiers who came out with Columbus was a young man of bravery and skill, named Alonso de Ojeda. He is particularly mentioned as possessing great courage, and excelling the average of those dauntless spirits who comprised the *conquistadores* of the New World. He was sent to take command of Fort Santo Tomas, in the Cibao, or gold region, and while he was there the place was invested by Caonabo. Having massacred the garrison of La Navidad, and having infused some of his daring spirit into the Indians under his control, Caonabo ventured to attack this isolated fort in the mountains. He reduced Ojeda to such extremes that, had not a rescuing force come to his assistance from

Isabella, he might have succumbed to the Indians, who surrounded the fort in great numbers. Driven off by superior arms, Caonabo retired to his mountain fastnesses, but soon returned with augmented force, only to be again defeated. Although he had hitherto been invincible among the islanders, he could not withstand the shock of firearms and the terrible ravages of the bloodhounds.

After the second repulse, Ojeda conceived a plan to capture Caonabo which was not less daring than ingenious. With a few chosen companions he made the perilous journey over the mountains (until then unknown to the Spaniards), and sought out the Carib cacique in his capital town of Maguana, where he found him surrounded by his warriors. By the exercise of his powers of craft and duplicity, Ojeda persuaded the cacique to accompany him alone into the forest, where he showed him a pair of handcuffs, which he told him were bracelets, sent him as a present by the King of Spain himself in recognition of his bravery and skill as a warrior. As these manacles were bright and shining, and unlike anything the simple Indian had ever seen before, he was easily persuaded that they were *Turey*, or a gift from Heaven, and induced to slip them on his wrists. No sooner had he done so, however, than Ojeda (who was exceedingly strong and muscular, though small in stature) reached over from his saddle, and by exerting all his strength swung the astonished warrior up behind him. The moment this was done his companions flanked the pair on horseback, dashed the spurs into their steeds, and darted off through



the forest, before the Indians could seize their arms and hinder them. Manacled as he was, and held at the point of the sword, Caonabo was obliged to submit, and as the upshot of this most daring adventure he was safely taken to Isabella, after days of wandering in the pathless forest, and delivered a prisoner to Columbus. It is said that he held no animosity toward Ojeda for depriving him of his liberty, but, on the contrary, had for him the highest esteem; for whenever he appeared in his cell he would always rise and salute him, whereas when Columbus made his appearance he treated him with indifference. He explained this by saying that Ojeda was a brave man or he could not have taken him captive; while he had no proof that Columbus was anything more than a coward, and cared nothing at all for his rank.

Unfortunate Caonabo, the first of the caciques to be deprived of liberty, was placed aboard a ship about to sail for Spain and died on the voyage. His captor, the inimitable Ojeda, after many other adventures, in which his rashness and valor were always conspicuous, finally died, and was buried within the doorway of the Franciscan monastery in the city of Santo Domingo, in accordance with his request, that all who entered there should walk over his grave.

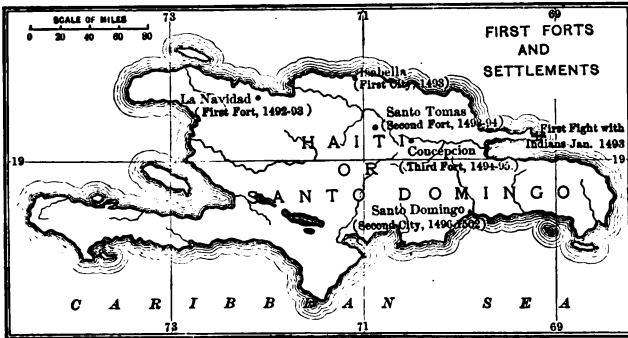
In the ship that carried Caonabo to Spain Columbus also took passage, and left Isabella in charge of his brothers, Don Diego and Don Bartholomew. The latter was a man of force and courage, in direct contrast to Don Diego, and at the same time he was more humane than Christopher. He had been sent

by Christopher to lay his scheme before the English court while the former was in Portugal, but was unsuccessful, was captured by pirates and detained for years a prisoner, and only succeeded in meeting his brother in 1493, when he arrived at Isabella. Weary and worn, almost blind, and sick with a fever, the Admiral gladly yielded his authority to Bartholomew during his illness, and when he sailed for Spain he created him *Adelantado*, or military governor of Hispaniola.

After Columbus had sailed there occurred an insurrection in the Spanish camp, many of the soldiers refusing to recognize the authority of Don Bartholomew, and one Roldan marched off with a body of followers and openly defied him. To the untoward deeds of Roldan and his band was probably due the next rising of the Indians under the Cacique Guarionex, for the Spanish rebels attacked Fort Concepción and encouraged the natives to rebel. Guarionex then refused longer to supply Don Bartholomew with provisions or gold, and in order to produce a famine among the Spaniards commanded that his people should plant no grain or roots, himself and his followers retiring to the mountains. But he was finally hunted out and brought back, only to attempt another uprising, after most of his people had been killed by their excessive labors in the mines or in battle. In conjunction with the Ciguayans, who lived in the mountains of Monte Cristi, Guarionex cut off isolated bodies of Spaniards, and even attacked the Adelantado himself when he had collected a force to overcome him. Eventually defeated

in battle, and driven to the mountains a fugitive, the cacique sought refuge with another chief, named Mayobanex; but in the end both were taken prisoners, and, with their families, confined in chains at Fort Concepción.

Three of the leading caciques were thus disposed of, and the fate of the two remaining was not long in suspense after the government of the island had



passed out of the hands of the Adelantado. He had treated the Indians with lenity; but those who came after him were more barbarous than savages.

It was during the administration of Don Bartholomew, and while the Admiral was absent, that a discovery was made which completely changed the current of events at Isabella and in the Vega. One of his soldiers, Diego Mendez, having wounded a comrade in a quarrel, fled from justice, and, after wandering over the mountains to the southward of Isabella, took refuge with a tribe governed by a female

cacique. A mutual attachment sprang up between them, and he for a while lived with her and her people quite contentedly. After they had learned a little of each other's language and could converse, she told him of rich deposits of gold on the banks of a river in her territory, and the soldier obtained such fine nuggets there that he concluded he might now return to Isabella and make his peace with the Adelantado. Don Bartholomew not only pardoned him, but when heard the story sent a detachment of soldiers to investigate. This was in the year 1496. The Spaniards had now been three years at Isabella, and as it had proved a barren settlement they abandoned it and founded another city on the south coast near the new mines, which was called Santo Domingo.

That was more than four hundred years ago, and (as I have narrated in a previous chapter) its structures have entirely disappeared. Yet here at one time gathered such men famous in history as Christopher, Diego, and Bartholomew Columbus; here lived awhile some of Spain's most gallant cavaliers. Traditions are rife about the spot, and it is said by those who have hunted in the surrounding forest that Isabella is haunted by the shades of the disappointed hidalgos, who wander mournfully through the gloom, and who still retain their native courtesy, for when met and accosted they return the salute with a sweeping bow, but always take off their heads with their hats!

## CHAPTER IX

### DESTRUCTION OF THE INDIANS

OF this beautiful island in its virgin state the Spanish historian Petrus Martyr wrote: "There is no province, nor any region, which is not remarkable for the majesty of its mountains, the fruitfulness of its vales, the pleasantness of its hills, and delightful plains, with abundance of fair rivers running through them. There never was any noisome animal found in it, nor yet any ravening four-footed beast; no lion, nor bear, no fierce tigers, nor crafty foxes, nor devouring wolves; but all things blessed and fortunate!"

But there were "fierce tigers" and "crafty foxes," nevertheless; not "ravening four-footed beasts," to be sure, but bipeds—brutes in the guise of Spaniards, bloodthirsty and murderous. They were only held in check by the energetic measures of the Adelantado, who (let it be said to his credit) did all he could for the protection of the inoffensive Indians. He was the chief actor in a very pretty scene that was witnessed soon after the departure of his brother for Spain, and it is a pleasure to narrate some details of it. One of the last of the Indian tribes to come under Spanish sway was that of Xaragua, governed by Cacique Bohechio,

which from its isolation had not been troubled by the strangers. Conceiving it to be his duty to visit and subjugate these Indians, Don Bartholomew set out, in the summer of 1496, with an imposing array of soldiers, for the province of Xaragua. He proceeded along the south coast, crossing rapid rivers and passing through a fertile and beautiful country, until at last he reached the borders of Xaragua, where the cacique, who had learned of his coming, met him with his Indian army drawn up in battle array. Perceiving, however, the futility of opposing such a force as the Adelantado had with him, Bohechio, who had been greatly impressed by the prowess of the Spaniards, at once abandoned whatever hostile intentions he may have had, and advanced frankly to proffer the hand of friendship.

His advances were met with equal frankness by Don Bartholomew, who was a man well fitted for intercourse with these primitive people, and together they marched—the steel-clad soldiers of the invading army and the naked Indians armed with lances, bows, and arrows—to the site of Bohechio's capital. It was situated at the head of an inlet now known as the Bay of Neiba, not far from the mouth of the river Yaqui (of the south), on the upper waters of which lay the late Caonabo's town of Maguana. The cacique sent swift messengers ahead to warn his sister of the coming arrival of guests, and when the combined armies reached the place a feast was found already spread, and the strangers were invited to a banquet of all the products of the land. Anacaona, Bohechio's sister, "received the Adelantado and his

followers with that natural grace and courtesy for which she was so celebrated, manifesting no hostility toward them on account of the fate her husband [Caonabo] had experienced at their hands. . . . The



Preparing the feast. (From an old print.)

Adelantado and his officers were conducted to the house of Bohechio, where a banquet was served of utias and a great variety of sea and river fish, with roots and fruits of excellent quality. Here first the Spaniards conquered their repugnance to the iguana, the favorite delicacy of the Indians, but which the former had regarded with disgust as a species of serpent."

I myself can testify to the delicate flavor of the iguana flesh, having eaten it often when encamped with the Caribs of Dominica; and will remark,

in passing, that it is still a favorite dish with the few remaining descendants of the West Indian aborigines. But we will not allow anything to divert us from that banquet and the performances that followed. Don Bartholomew was entertained most royally during two days, and when he departed it was with the assurance that Cacique Bohechio would render him tribute—not of gold, for his territory did not yield it, but of cotton.

From this scene of sylvan delights the Adelantado was suddenly called away, to suppress an insurrection in the Vega and to superintend affairs at the new settlement of San Cristoval, which, from the abundance of gold found there, was often called the Golden Tower. But he looked back with pleasure to the delights of that reception by Bohechio and his beautiful sister Anacaona, and when the time arrived to go for the promised tribute he set forth joyfully. He found that the cacique had been true to his word, and had gathered a whole hutful of cotton, besides vast quantities of cassava bread, of which the Spaniards stood in much need. There then ensued a repetition of the banquets and entertainments, the mock battles and tourneys, with which the simple natives had regaled him on his previous visit. After the tribute was collected, Don Bartholomew sent for one of the caravels he had built at Isabella, and gave the cacique and his sister a sail over the tranquil surface of the bay. They had never seen anything resembling this great *canoe*, with its big white sails, like the wings of a gigantic bird, and Princess Anacaona fell into transports of delight.



Perhaps I have been remiss in neglecting to introduce, or at least more particularly mention, this beautiful caciquess, Anacaona, the Golden Flower of Xaragua.\* She was the wife of Carib Caonabo, chief of the Golden House, who had been torn from his mountain capital by Alonso de Ojeda and transported to Spain. She was then, to all intents, a widow when Don Bartholomew met her, and as the Adelantado was himself a bachelor—well, it is said that he fell in love with this flower-like princess and was captivated by her grace and beauty. Believing herself to be what she really was at that time, the relict of Caonabo, she might have felt some resentment toward those who had encompassed his death; but, on the contrary, she showed great pleasure in the society of noble Don Bartholomew Columbus. When, as they approached the caravel, a cannon was fired by way of salute, she was so frightened that she fell into his arms, and he had to reassure her with kind words and laughter before she would venture on board that great canoe which had so excited her admiration. The cruise that ensued was the most wonderful adventure the simple princess had ever experienced, and as the great sails filled with a gentle breeze, and the band played martial airs, she and her royal brother knelt at Don Bartholomew's feet,

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\* Her name was derived from *ana*, a flower, and *caona*, gold—Anacaona, the Golden Flower. Similarly, her husband's, from *caona*, gold, and *bo*, chief, great—Caonabo, the Golden Lord. Also, Bohechio, from *bo*, great; *hec*, chief; and *hio*, country—Cacique of a great country.

gazing into one another's face with astonishment and delight.

After the caravel was freighted with the tribute of cotton, and the Adelantado lingered behind to say good-by, there were tears in the eyes of the innocent princess, and she made him promise to return soon to the delightful Xaragua. They interchanged presents, and parted with feelings of mutual esteem. Among other things that Anacaona gave Don Bartholomew were "fourteen chairs of ebony, beautifully wrought, and more than sixty earthen vessels of different sorts for the use of his kitchen and table, all of which were ornamented with figures of various kinds,



Indian implements, Hispaniola.

fantastic forms, and accurate representations of living animals." It is not told what the Adelantado did with those valuable gifts; but there are many museums in this country and in Europe that would pay for them more than their weight in gold. It may be recalled that the Indians of the Bahamas and Cuba had similar "chairs," made of stone and wood, and which they valued highly.

Alas that the inexorable demands of history compel me to chronicle a sad sequel to this romantic

adventure of Don Bartholomew! But his evident infatuation and Anacaona's beauty excited the jealousy of one who subsequently came to power in the island, and the lovely princess was destroyed, together with her brother and all his subjects.

The finding of gold by Diego Mendez turned the tide of colonization from the north to the south coast of the island, and was the origin of the city of Santo Domingo, which yet exists, near the original site selected for it by the Adelantado. Don Bartholomew, acting in accordance with his eminent brother's instructions, erected a fort on the eastern bank of the Ozama River in 1496; but the settlement that clustered around this fort was destroyed by a hurricane in 1502. During the few years of its existence, however, this town of the east bank of the river (on the west bank of which the present city stands) was the theater of important events. To it came Christopher Columbus after the discovery of Trinidad, on his third voyage, and here he found his sturdy brother employed in a business not altogether agreeable. If the subjugation and subsequent development of the island had been intrusted altogether to Don Bartholomew, we might now have a far different story to relate, instead of being compelled to write of repeated barbarities and massacres.

But Don Bartholomew, who was more richly endowed than his brothers with the qualities necessary to a leader of men and commander of armies, was always compelled by circumstances to act in a subordinate capacity. During the absence of the Admiral there had occurred the uprising of a band of Span-

iards under Roldan, who finally became a scourge to the whole island, despite the efforts of the Adelantado to suppress them. After committing horrible atrocities in the Vega, they suddenly shifted the scene of their depredations to the province of Xaragua, and there set in motion a train of events that brought about the extinction of those generous Indians who had received the Adelantado so well, and who also extended a welcome to these despicable vagabonds. The two brothers Columbus united in a last attempt to quell this rebellion, and in doing so may have exercised undue severity upon their quondam companions; for many were imprisoned, and several were hung, without trial and upon unreliable testimony as to their guilt. These oppressive measures caused complaints to be sent to Spain, and when they reached the ears of the sovereigns an officer of the royal household, one Francisco de Bobadilla, was sent to Santo Domingo to inquire into the alleged irregularities there. He was invested with ample powers for bringing any culprits to justice, "to arrest their persons and sequester their effects," and also furnished with blank letters of authority by King Ferdinand which he could fill out at his pleasure. When he arrived at Santo Domingo we may be sure he found warrant enough to proceed against the brothers, Christopher, Diego, and Bartholomew, who were in power. As he entered the harbor of the new city, the first object that attracted his attention was the body of a Spaniard swinging on a gibbet; the first persons who came out to meet him were loud in their complaints of the

arbitrary acts of Columbus. The very next morning, after he had attended mass, he caused to be read from the porch of the little chapel the paper from his sovereigns proclaiming him supreme master of the island. On the second morning he caused the arrest of Don Diego, who had been left in charge of the city and its defences, and sent an insolent message to the Admiral, who was absent in the interior, commanding him to appear at once and answer charges. Christopher Columbus, discoverer of the Indies and Admiral of the Ocean Sea, felt secure in his authority, in view of the solemn compact, or "capitulation," entered into between himself and his sovereigns at Granada just before he sailed on his first voyage. Believing this message only another vamping of some upstart pretender, he hesitated to comply with the command; still, as the capital city was in a turmoil, he set out to investigate. As he neared the city, another messenger met him with a paper bearing the king's signature, ordering him to give credence to Bobadilla and not to oppose his wishes. Bowing to the inevitable, as a faithful servant of his sovereign, he continued his journey to the capital and surrendered himself into the hands of Bobadilla, who so far transcended his real authority as to cast him into prison.

This high-handed act and the violence of the people, who were now all arrayed against him, led Columbus to expect nothing less than death, and when at last Bobadilla had decided to send him to Spain, and dispatched an officer to take him from the castle to the ship, he was in despair, says his biographer,

Washington Irving. "When he beheld the officer enter with the guard, he thought it was to take him to the scaffold. 'Villejo,' said he mournfully to the commander of the guard, 'whither are you taking me?' 'To the ship, your Excellency, to embark for Spain,' replied the other. 'To embark?' repeated the Admiral earnestly. 'Villejo, do you speak the truth?' 'By the life of your Excellency,' replied the honest officer, 'it is true.' With these words the Admiral was comforted, and felt as one restored from death to life."

As Don Bartholomew was then at the head of the army, seeking out the rebels and endeavoring to restore quiet in the distracted island, it was feared that he, being in possession of arms and having devoted adherents, might make trouble; but he held his duty to the king as above any personal considerations, and gave himself up without resistance. He, too, was placed in irons, and the three brothers were sent under guard and in shackles to Spain.

We can not follow them into Spain, for pressing affairs claim our attention in the island. Under Bobadilla the criminal misgovernment of Santo Domingo became such that the poor Indians sank lower and lower, and upon their limbs were riveted shackles far stronger than those so unjustly placed upon Columbus. It was not intended by Ferdinand and Isabella that Bobadilla should do more than inquire into the causes of troubles in the island, and so they sent out another Spaniard to supersede him—a human monster named Nicolas de Ovando. This man had so won their confidence that the sovereigns had no

conception of his real character; but as he was apparently modest and courteous in demeanor, and held high rank as a commander in the elevated Order of Alcantara, he was thought to be the right man for the vacant governorship of Santo Domingo. He arrived at that port the middle of April, 1502, with the largest fleet and the most magnificent appointment that had up to that time reached America, and immediately took upon himself the supreme command.

Meanwhile Columbus had reinstated himself with his sovereigns, at least to the degree that they allowed him to fit out and command another expedition, but with explicit orders not to touch at Hispaniola. It happened, however, that one of his ships became somewhat unseaworthy, and he took advantage of this circumstance to seek the port of Santo Domingo, and when off the harbor sent an officer ashore with a request that he be allowed to go in for shelter, as he perceived signs of an approaching storm. This reasonable request the stern Ovando refused, and then the Admiral, more generous than his enemy, learning that the fleet which was to carry Bobadilla back to Spain was about to depart, sent word that a hurricane was surely about to burst upon the island, and begged Ovando to detain the vessels until the storm had passed. He himself, denied shelter at the port, stood down the coast and gathered his little fleet within the mouth of some wild river, where he awaited the hurricane. It came as he had predicted, sweeping the seas with fury, catching Bobadilla's fleet near the eastern end of the island, wrecking and shattering it—all but one small

vessel containing what remained of the property of the Admiral, and which alone reached Spain in safety.

Bobadilla himself was drowned, as his ship was sunk, and with him perished Roldan, the rebel chief, and many other men of note in the colony. In addition to the great loss of life caused by this hurricane, vast treasure went down with the ill-fated fleet—most of the gold accumulated through the terrible toils of the Indians; but that which was most lamented was the largest nugget ever obtained in the New World. This famous mass of gold was found by an Indian woman, a slave in the employ of two Spanish miners at the Golden Tower, on the river Heyna. It was so large and regularly shaped that the miners, in the first flush of their discovery, roasted a pig and had it served upon it, at the same time boasting that no potentate of Europe, Asia, or the Indies ever had dined off such a valuable table as theirs! All this vast treasure still lies buried beneath the sea near the east end of Hispaniola, and awaits the coming of some great man who shall imitate Sir William Phipps, who found the sunken galleon off Puerto Plata.

The fleet under command of Columbus safely weathered the hurricane, though it was scattered by the gales, and but for the consummate seamanship of the Adelantado one of the vessels would have been lost. Though dispersed in various directions, his vessels all gathered finally at Port Hermoso, on the southwest coast of the island, and thence, after undergoing repairs, departed for the east coast of Honduras. Few can imagine with what feelings of an-



guish the Admiral and the Adelantado must have abandoned the island and people they had so long and vainly striven to redeem from desolation. It was with sorrow and in disaster that this the last voyage of Columbus was begun, and in yet greater sorrow and disaster it ended, as we shall note when we narrate the history of Jamaica.

Now we come to the crowning horror of all that hideous history—the massacre of the generous and amiable natives of Xaragua. We have seen two of the caciques meet their death, Guacanagari and Caonabo; the third, Guarionex, who was made captive and sent aboard a vessel of the fleet Columbus had endeavored to detain, perished in company with Roldan and Bobadilla. Borne down by the atrocities of the Spaniards, whom he had hospitably received and generously supported, the fourth cacique, Bohechio, had also died, and the succession to the caciqueship now devolved upon his sister, Anacaona.

Under pretense of collecting tribute, but really with sinister intention, Ovando, the governor, set out, with a large force of foot and cavalry, to visit Xaragua. He was received with the same gracious courtesy and entertained with the same hospitality that was shown the Adelantado several years before, but which he requited in a manner that causes the historian to shrink from the task of description. In brief, after gathering within a hollow square of his steel-clad soldiers the unsuspecting chiefs of the tribe and their subjects, under pretense of showing them a novel tourney, he gave orders for their massacre. They were shot, cut down with the sword, babes and

children were speared in their mothers' arms, women were cut to pieces, and men were tortured at the stake before being burned in the presence of their wives and daughters. No Spaniard lost his life that day, but thousands of Indians were slaughtered.

## CHAPTER X

### A CITY OF SAD MEMORIES

To those who delight in sensational incidents, in accounts of massacres, carnage and deeds of blood, the writer recommends a perusal of the history of Santo Domingo at this period; but those who can sympathize with a downtrodden and persecuted people, upon whose necks the oppressors had placed the iron heel of slavery, will turn with a shudder from narrations of this character. I would fain draw a veil over what transpired after the cruel Ovando came to the island as governor; for humanity's sake it would be better had he never existed. It matters not that an interval of centuries lies between those deeds and the present time. In the sight of God, human life was as sacred then as now; but with the Spaniards of that time it was held as something of small value, and they shed blood as one might pour out water from a flask; they revelled in deeds of violence, and delighted in the infliction of suffering.

Unfortunate Anacaona, once the pride of Xaragua, the delight of all who beheld her, friend of the Spaniards and the benefactor of her people, was loaded with chains, taken to the city of Santo Domingo, and, after being put to the torture, ignominiously hanged. Such was the barbarous spirit of the

unspeakable Ovando, that he held it to his credit for hanging, instead of burning her alive! It is small satisfaction to note that the barbarities of the Spaniards brought upon them the contempt, and even hatred, of all Europe, and that later on they were considered as almost beyond the pale of humanity. This fact will be pointed out when we come to describe the doings of the buccaneers.

“The scheme of English colonization,” says the talented Parkman in his *Pioneers of France in the New World*, “made no account of the Indian tribes; in the scheme of French colonization they were all in all. . . . It was a triple alliance of soldier, priest, and trader.” Such an alliance, indeed, existed in the scheme of Spanish colonization, but not, alas! for the benefit of the poor Indian. Through misguided effort the world lost far more than a few ignorant aborigines: humanity lost, civilization lost, the great and continuous scheme of enlightenment lost—more than we can express. Says the historian Sir Arthur Helps: “The laws of thought which create and modify natural religion might perhaps be more easily discovered from a consideration of all that was noticed in the discovery of the New World than from any other body of evidence which exists on that subject, gathered from the religions of the rest of the world.” Yet through the criminal neglect, not to say willful acts, of the Spaniards even this evidence has been lost to us; for we must rely upon traditions in place of records, as the conquerors destroyed, instead of preserving, the ancient histories.

The Spaniards destroyed by fire the picture writ-

ings of the Aztecs, the bark chronicles of Yucatan, the primitive records of the Peruvians, and the most important relics of the West Indies. Contrast the English and French with the Spanish methods of settlement and subjugation, and, by any comparisons we can institute, the Spaniards are shown to have been cruel and bloodthirsty, ignorant and fanatical, wanting in the commonest attributes of mercy and compassion.

Of the more than a million inhabitants of the West Indies found there when the Spaniards came only a scanty remnant now exists, and this is of the fierce, sturdy, and warlike Caribs. The gentle peoples of Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico quickly became victims of the craft and superior arms of the invaders, and soon were totally exterminated.

“In estimating the number of our islanders when first discovered by Columbus,” says Bryan Edwards, a native chronicler of Jamaica, “historians widely differ. Las Casas computes them at six millions; but the natives of Hispaniola were reckoned by Oviedo at one million only, and by Martyr, who wrote on the authority of Columbus, at one million two hundred thousand; and this last account is probably correct. . . . Even one who would fain palliate such horrible wickedness admits that in the short interval of fifteen years subsequent to the discovery of the West Indies the Spaniards had reduced the natives of Hispaniola from a million to less than sixty thousand. . . . The Spaniards distributed the Indians into lots (*repartimientos*), and compelled them to



A battle between Spaniards and Indians.

dig in the mines, without rest or intermission, until death, their only refuge, put a period to their sufferings. Such as attempted resistance or escape, their merciless tyrants hunted down with dogs, which were fed on their flesh. They disregarded sex and age, and, with impious and frantic bigotry, even called in religion to sanctify their cruelties. Some, more zealous than the rest, forced their miserable captives into the water, and, after administering to them the rite of baptism, cut their throats the next moment, to prevent their apostasy! Others made a vow to hang or burn thirteen Indians every morning, in honor of our Saviour and the Twelve Apostles! Nor were these the excesses only of a blind and remorseless fanaticism. The Spaniards were actuated in many instances by such wantonness of malice as is wholly unexampled in the history of human depravity. . . . Martyr relates that it was a frequent practice among them to murder the Indians of Hispaniola in sport, or merely, as he observes, '*to keep their hands in use.*' They had an emulation which of them could most dexterously strike off the head of an Indian at a blow, and wagers frequently depended upon this hellish exercise."

Says Dr. Robertson, in his History of America: "Several vessels were fitted out for the Lucayos [Bahamas], the commanders of which informed the islanders, with whose language they were acquainted, that they came from a delicious country, in which their departed ancestors resided, by whom they were sent to invite them thither, to partake of the bliss which they enjoyed. That simple people listened

with wonder and credulity, and, fond of visiting their friends, followed the Spaniards with eagerness. By this artifice above forty thousand were decoyed into Hispaniola, to share the sufferings which were the lot of the inhabitants of that island, and to mingle their groans and tears with those of that wretched race of men. Many of them, in the anguish of despair, refused all manner of sustenance, and, retiring to desert caves and unfrequented woods, silently gave up the ghost. . . . One of the Lucayans, who was more desirous of life, or had greater courage than most of his countrymen, procured instruments of stone and cut down a large spongy tree called the *jarama*, or silk cotton, the body of which he hollowed into a canoe. He then provided himself with paddles, some maize, and a few calabashes of water, and persuaded another man and woman to embark with him for the Lucayos. Their navigation was prosperous for near two hundred miles, and they were almost within sight of their own long-lost shores, when unfortunately they were met by a Spanish ship, which brought them back to slavery and sorrow! "

The worst of these cruelties were practiced in the time of the wretched Ovando, who has the unenviable reputation of having murdered the last of the caciques. This cacique, a giant in stature, named Cotubanama, reigned in the eastern province of Higüey. Owing to the oppressions of the Spaniards he, too, became rebellious, and Ovando dispatched an army to kill him and subdue his tribe. The campaign was long and bloody, for the natives of Higüey were valiant, and, with the fate of their countrymen



in mind, most desperate. At last, however, gallant Cotubanama was captured and hanged, like a common malefactor, at Santo Domingo. He was the last of the native rulers, and after his death there was for a time peace in the island—the peace of desolation and of the desert.

After the massacre at Xaragua, bands of blood-thirsty Spaniards ranged the island for months, seeking victims for their lusts. Says Las Casas, who was in the island at the time, and whose life shines out brightly in contrast with those fiendish savages, his countrymen: “They wished to inspire terror throughout the land. They sought out the miserable Indians who had taken refuge in the mountains and in caves, and massacred them without mercy: the aged and infirm as well as able-bodied, feeble women and helpless children. They cut off the hands of those whom they found roving at large, and sent them, as they said, to deliver themselves as ‘letters to their friends,’ demanding their surrender. Numberless were those whose hands were amputated in this manner, and many of them sank down and died by the way, through anguish and loss of blood.” But this does not by any means complete the list of Spanish tortures inflicted upon these helpless people. Some were so unutterably fiendish as to be beyond mention, having been copied from those malignant demons of the Inquisition. Many of the chiefs were roasted before slow fires, others hung upon long, low gibbets, with their feet just touching the ground, and then hacked to pieces with swords. Las Casas says that he himself saw four or five of the principal

lords broiled upon wooden gridirons, and that the sergeant in charge, when his superior complained that the agonizing cries of the wretched victims disturbed his siesta, filled their mouths with bullets to stifle their groans! Las Casas states this as a fact, and adds that he knew the sergeant, and was acquainted with his family, then living in Seville.

Well may one of the historians whom we have quoted exclaim with indignation: "After reading these accounts, who can help forming a wish that the hand of Heaven, by some miraculous interposition, had swept these European tyrants from the face of the earth, who, like so many beasts of prey, roamed the world only to desolate and destroy; and, more remorseless than the fiercest savage, thirsted for human blood, without having the impulse of natural appetite to plead in their defense!"

If further proof were needed, we might turn to the letters of Columbus himself, for in one of them, written to the king, he says: "The Indians of Hispaniola were and are the riches of the island, for it is they who cultivate and make the bread and the provisions of the Christians; who dig the gold from the mines, and perform all the offices and labors both of men and beasts. I am informed that since I left this island six parts out of seven of the natives are dead, all through ill treatment and inhumanity; some by the sword, others by blows and cruel usage, others through hunger. The greater part have perished in the mountains and glens, whither they have fled, from not being able to support the labors imposed upon them."

The massacre of the natives of Xaragua and the death of Anacaona took place in 1503; but though the intelligence of these sad events reached Queen Isabella the next year as she lay on her deathbed, and she made Ferdinand promise to recall Ovando, the author of these iniquities, the governor was wringing a rich revenue from the island, and so was allowed to remain four years longer. Finally, this servant of Satan was called to Spain, where he was rewarded with high honors, and in his place was sent out Don Diego, the son of Columbus. He had long been an applicant for the position formerly held by his father, and after the death of Columbus, in 1506, he instituted a memorable process against his sovereign before the Council of the Indies at Seville. To the credit of this court, after a minute investigation of his claims, he was at last pronounced hereditary viceroy and lord high admiral of all the countries and islands discovered by his father, and declared entitled to all his privileges. It is improbable, however, that King Ferdinand would have recognized these claims even then had not Don Diego strengthened his position by an illustrious marriage, with Maria de Toledo, daughter of the grand commander of Leon, and niece of the ever-infamous Duke of Alva.

In the year 1509 the noble pair arrived here as viceroy and vicereine of Hispaniola, accompanied by a train of attendants and with many highborn ladies in their suite. Don Diego was warmly welcomed, and lost no time in erecting a castellated palace on the right bank of the Ozama, near its

mouth, the ruins of which may yet be seen, a mass of gray rock, still with the semblance of a castle, but roofless and devoted to ignoble uses. The great city wall, fortified and battlemented, which was begun shortly before the palace, yet incloses the present capital of the island, and the *homenage*, a castle also built in 1509, still claims attention as one of the finest



Interior of Santo Domingo church.

specimens of its kind extant in this hemisphere. This is not the castle in which Columbus was confined in chains in 1500 (though often claimed as such), for that was on the other side of the river, and long since fell into ruin. But the chapel, from the doorway of which Bobadilla proclaimed his authority for the arrest and imprisonment of Columbus, yet exists—or

at least a portion of it—on the east bank, opposite and overlooking the city.

I have called this capital a city of sad memories, because so many events happened here connected with the extinction of the Indians and the declining years of Columbus. His fortunes may be said to have taken a downward turn at Isabella, in 1494, after he had sent home to slavery the five hundred natives; but it was in connection with this city of Santo Domingo that he experienced the most cruel reverses of his life. Hither he came at the end of his third voyage, in 1498, after the discovery of Trinidad and the Pearl Islands, only to find confusion and destruction rampant; hence he was sent in chains by Bobadilla, in 1500; from this port he was turned ignominiously away by Ovando, in 1502; and by the same arrogant governor was received as a subject of charity, after his disastrous voyage to Jamaica, in 1504. Hence he sailed, for the last time across the Atlantic, to Spain, the same year his royal benefactress, Isabella, passed away, and but two years before his own demise, in 1506. Sad yet glorious memories and events ever to be cherished in the hearts of all Americans, this half-ruined city of Santo Domingo, on the bank of the river Ozama, holds within its walls! It has to-day, more than four hundred years after it was founded, no less than ten structures dating from the time of Don Diego Columbus, whose viceroyship extended to 1517.

The head of the Franciscan monastery at that time was Pedro de Cordova, at whose suggestion

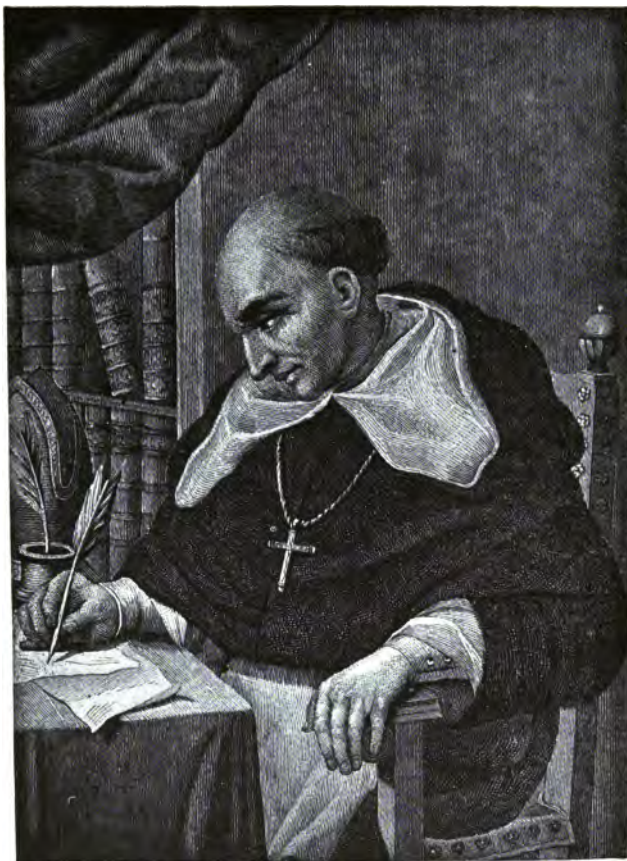
Las Casas undertook to form that ill-fated Indian colony at Cumana, on the north coast of South America, in 1521. The monastery walls are fast crumbling, yet to-day are the grandest in the capital, with deserted corridors in which those first missionaries once walked, arches draped with vines, and a roofless chapel. So complete is the ruin that no one can tell exactly where the remains of those two famous men, Alonso de Ojeda and Don Bartholomew Columbus, who died and were buried here, now rest.

Many great names, indeed, are identified with this capital city of Hispaniola, once the seat of a New World empire; and there is none greater than that connected with the church and monastery of Santo Domingo, which was erected early in the first decade of the sixteenth century, but still in a state of good preservation. This name is that of Bartolomé de Las Casas, who for his lifelong efforts in behalf of the oppressed Indians was officially designated their "protector," and whose history of Spanish crimes is a standing reproach to the country that gave him birth. Attached to the church of Santo Domingo are the ruined walls of America's first university founded by the Dominicans, which was a flourishing seat of learning a hundred years before the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth, and so celebrated that the city became known as "the Athens of the New World." But church and university are better known from their association with Las Casas, who was born in 1474, and whose father sailed with Columbus on his first voyage. He was a contemporary of the Admiral, yet, says his biographer, "he survived

him by sixty years, outlived King Ferdinand fifty years, Charles V eight, Hernan Cortes nineteen, Cardinal Ximenes forty-nine, and Pizarro twenty-five years, dying in 1566 at the age of ninety-two."

It was thought that Las Casas accompanied Columbus on his third voyage, in 1498, returning when he was sent home in chains, in 1500; but it is well authenticated that he came to Hispaniola with Ocampo in 1502, receiving a repartimiento of Indians, like the rest. Eight years later he was ordained a priest, and in 1511 he went with Diego Velasquez to Cuba, where, in 1514, he became convinced of the sinful nature of Indian slavery, renounced his holdings, and went to Spain to plead with Ferdinand the cause of the downtrodden natives. He arrived too late to see him, as he was then on his deathbed; but Cardinal Ximenes, who was for a while regent of the kingdom, approved his schemes, and he was sent back to Hispaniola empowered to do all he could to correct the terrible abuses. He was thwarted at every turn by Fonseca, bishop of Burgos and president of the Council of the Indies, who himself owned large numbers of Indian slaves, and when he at one time told him that more than seven thousand children had perished in three months' time in the island of Cuba alone that hard-hearted prelate answered: "Well, what is that to me, and what is it to the king?"

"Is it nothing to your lordship, or to the king," indignantly rejoined Las Casas, "that all these innocent souls should perish? O great and eternal God! of what use our preaching when the Indians see



Bartolomé de Las Casas.



those who call themselves 'Christians' acting thus in opposition to Christians!"

Finally, in 1521, he was allowed to attempt a colony for the protection of the Indians; but it failed, through no direct fault of his own, and the next year, despairing and almost broken-hearted, he joined the Dominican brotherhood of Hispaniola and retired from the world, "to the great joy of the brothers, and also of the inhabitants of Hispaniola"; but for different reasons. The wicked Spaniards rejoiced, thinking they now had him safely interned; but during those eight years of seclusion he was meditating upon his great lifework—that monument of learning and research, chronicle of Spanish atrocities—*The Brief Relation of the Destruction of the Indies*. He afterward went to Spain, and was appointed missionary to Guatemala and bishop of Chiapas in Mexico. But note, reader mine, that his greatest labors were performed in Santo Domingo, and within that monastery (of which but ruined walls remain to-day) this man conceived the work which will outlast the centuries!

## CHAPTER XI

### MORE ABOUT SANTO DOMINGO

THERE have been several contestants for the honor of being the oldest settlement of European foundation in the New World, but without a doubt it must be assigned to the city of Santo Domingo. If anything were to-day remaining of Isabella, the first city founded by Columbus, on the north coast of the island, in 1493, that spot would most certainly be entitled to the honor; but while at one time there were many houses there, and a floating population of hundreds, still Isabella did not long remain a place of residence. It was virtually abandoned in 1496, when the Adelantado founded Santo Domingo, and, after existing in ruins for centuries, its last remains, consisting of a few tons of hewn stone, earthen tiles, and shards of pottery, were sent to the Columbian Exposition, in 1893. Thus ill-starred Isabella, now represented merely by a vacant city site and a name, is given over to the bats and owls.

I have alluded to some of the most interesting relics of Spanish times still to be seen in the capital; but nearly everything here, in truth, leads us back to those ancient days of Spanish domination. There is one structure, however, that may be said to present nearly four centuries of Spanish-American his-

tory in epitome, and that is the old cathedral, which stands in the heart of the city. It was planned in 1514 and finished in 1540, and while almost every street, every plaza, and every angle of the inclosing walls of the capital is identified with some one of Spain's greatest minds when Spain was truly great, this ecclesiastical structure overtops them all for interest, perhaps, except the old university where the erudite Las Casas taught and labored.

There is, in the opinion of many, a great treasure in the custody of the cathedral chapter, of its very nature unique, and which consists of the sacred dust of Columbus. Now, it is perhaps not generally known that two cities, Havana and Santo Domingo, at one time claimed to possess the time-honored remains of the Great Admiral. To know how this strange thing happened, we must transport ourselves, in imagination, to Spain, the "motherland" of the Spanish colonies in the West Indies. We must imagine ourselves in the city of Valladolid in the year 1506, and gathered reverently about the deathbed of the great Genoese as, in faint and broken accents, he tells of his desire to make one more voyage across the Atlantic, and to be interred in the convent of Concepción de la Vega, which he was instrumental in founding, in the island of his greatest achievements. This desire is expressed in his last will and testament, in accordance with which—but not until about the year 1540—his remains were removed from a convent church in Seville, whither they had been taken from Valladolid, and transported to Santo Domingo. They did not obtain final sepulture in the convent of the Vega,

however, as it was destroyed by an earthquake about that time, but were deposited in the cathedral of the capital, then approaching completion. This pious office was performed by the noble widow of Don Diego Columbus, who also at the same time took thither the remains of her husband, who had died in 1526. We have no direct evidence that this was done, but nineteen years later, or in 1559, the archbishop of that diocese wrote: "The tomb of Don Cristobal Colon, where are his bones, is much venerated in this cathedral." It is true that there is not the slightest record of the sepulture, but this is explained by the fact that less than thirty years later the capital was bombarded and the city sacked by Sir Francis Drake. Fearing the desecration of the tomb containing one so well known as Columbus, all traces of it are said to have been obliterated by covering it over with earth or plaster. Thus all evidence was finally lost, and for more than two hundred years thereafter the history of the event was preserved solely through local tradition.

Now we come to another chapter in this strange story. In 1795, when Santo Domingo was ceded to France, Spain nobly resolved that the ashes of the great discoverer should not rest beneath an alien flag, and so she sent an admiral of her navy to remove them to Havana, accompanied by a reputed descendant of Columbus, the Duke of Veragua, grandfather of the gentleman of that title whom we so highly honored in 1893. These gentlemen of Spain came over with a fleet, and, guided by the local tradition, which was to the effect that these

remains lay at the right of the high altar of the cathedral, they found and opened a vault beneath the pavement of the presbytery, on the "gospel side," which was about one yard in depth and one in breadth. Within this vault they found some plates of lead, together with fragments of bone and dust, all which were reverently collected and transferred with sol-



Interior of the cathedral, Santo Domingo.

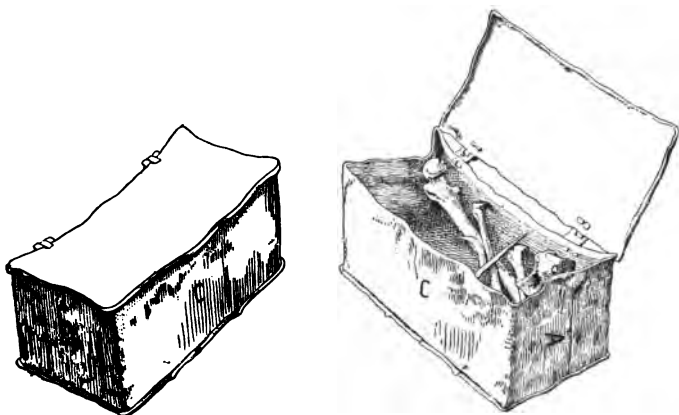
emn ceremony aboard the man-of-war San Lorenzo, then lying in the harbor.

They then set sail with their precious relics for Havana, where, with pomp and parade, they were taken to the cathedral and placed within a niche opened for that purpose in the wall at the right of the presbytery. A marble tablet was affixed, after

the niche was closed, bearing that grandiloquent inscription beginning, "*O restos y imagen del grande Colon,*" which so many travelers have seen and have so often transcribed.

Still another chapter: The Spanish officials to whom had been delegated this honorable duty sincerely believed they had performed it thoroughly and satisfactorily. They had found a vault containing human bones and dust, and, moreover, it was approximately in the spot designated by tradition as that where Columbus lay buried. But they had not found, and they did not claim they had, any trace of an inscription or other evidence showing beyond a doubt that these were the remains they had sought! No one ever disputed the correctness of their conclusions until 1877, eighty-two years after the conjectural transference, when some workmen were making repairs in the chancel of the cathedral of Santo Domingo, another vault was brought to light at the left of the altar. This contained only fragments of a leaden case, but with an inscription sufficiently legible to show that the ashes formerly there were those of Don Luis Colon, son of Don Diego, grandson of Christopher Columbus, and the first Duke of Veragua. The archbishop of the diocese, a learned and venerable man, then recalled the tradition (strangely for the first time) that the entire presbytery had been granted to the Columbus family as a place of sepulture, and so was moved to institute a search for the others. And others were found! First, the veritable vault from which the Havana remains were taken; then, separated from it by a slab of stone less than a

foot in width, yet another, close to the cathedral wall. From this latter was taken a leaden casket in good preservation, on the cover or lid of which was an inscription showing that it was, in truth, dedicated to the "First Admiral and Discoverer of America." This inscription was on the outside; inside the lid



Leaden casket found in 1877.

was the following: "*Il'tre y Esc'do Varon, Dn. Cristoral Colon*" — "Noble and illustrious man, Don Christopher Columbus." A critical examination of the contents of the casket revealed human bones, some of them well preserved, though the skull was missing; a silver plate with the titles of Columbus; and a large bullet, which is supposed to have been received by him in Africa, the wound from which caused him much pain throughout his life.

There is the evidence, "in a nutshell," and perhaps the reader may be as well qualified as the writer

to judge of the authenticity of the newly discovered remains; though I myself made a most exhaustive examination, when I was in Santo Domingo, in 1892, and came to the conclusion that the real ashes of Columbus were still in that island. As I wrote at that time: "The error of the Spaniards, in 1795, lay in their ignorance of the fact that there were *two* vaults closely contiguous, and that only a few inches from the one they opened was another, and the one they really sought. Still the Spanish admiral and the Duke of Veragua took the remains of somebody to Havana, and if they were not those of the Admiral, then to whom did they pertain? We can not, of course, assume that he had 'two sets of remains,' like the Arab marabout in Algiers who is commemorated by two tombs; but the answer may be found in the statement that they were probably those of his son, Don Diego, which were taken to the island by his widow at the same time his father's ashes were transferred thither from Spain."

At the time of the rediscovery, in 1877, all the foreign consuls then resident at Santo Domingo were gathered to inspect the vault and casket, in order that there might be no suspicion of fraud, and among them was the Italian representative, Signor Luigi Cambiaso, who afterward issued a document substantiating the Dominican claim in every particular. Fourteen years later, when I met him there, he was of the same opinion still—that the ashes of Columbus yet rested where he himself desired they should be placed, in the island of Santo Domingo. It was, I thought at the time, a strange chance that Signor



Cambiaso, himself a native of Genoa, in which city Columbus was born, should have been resident in Santo Domingo during this official examination!

Another chapter, or, rather, a sequel: In the autumn of 1898, after the Spaniards had to evacuate Havana, the retiring governor general, Blanco, invited some dignitaries to be present at the removal from their niche in the cathedral of the "only legitimate remains" of the great Columbus, which he was about to take on board a man-of-war and carry to Spain. Like his countrymen of a century ago, General Blanco declared that the remains of Spain's illustrious admiral should not be allowed to rest, even for a moment, under an alien banner. So these ashes of a Columbus (but whether of the great Christopher or of his son, is an open question) were taken on another trip across the Atlantic, and found what we hope will be their last resting place—beneath the pavement of the grand old cathedral of Seville. Counting this last voyage, in death and life Columbus made ten trips across the Atlantic, without it nine; though it is probable that not his remains, but those of his two sons, Diego and Ferdinand, now repose beneath that marble slab in the Seville cathedral, with its world-famous inscription: "*A Castilla y á Leon, Mundo Nuevo dió Colon.*"

Peace to their ashes, wherever they lie!

Now let us take up again the thread of Hispaniola's history, and snip off such portions as may seem noteworthy. I would not say that, since the days of the *conquistadores*, there have been no men of mark

who have risen head and shoulders above their fellows; but if there have been such, they were few, and are difficult to find. As early as 1517 the island was inflicted with the Spanish inquisitors, who, though they did not send so many to the stake as in Spain, yet lined their purses well with the proceeds from confiscated properties. The sixteenth century witnessed not only the extinction of the Indians in Hispaniola, but the total decline of the island in a commercial sense, and as a factor in the New World policy. In the year 1545 it was reported that the Spaniards remaining here did not exceed in all eleven thousand souls, and "the island was almost brought to a desert." The several expeditions of the great English sea pirate, Sir Francis Drake, hastened the fall of forlorn Santo Domingo. In 1586, for instance, he did all he could to destroy the capital, after he had reduced it by his fleet; but the massively constructed houses resisted his attempts to fire them, so that he was finally induced to compromise on a ransom of twenty-five thousand ducats (about thirty thousand dollars) and take his departure. Again, in 1595, not long before his death, he harried the coasts and hastened the end of the already moribund colony. Finally, in 1606, the royal court at Madrid ordered its ports closed, except the harbor of Santo Domingo, and all the Spanish families into the interior. Many complied, becoming agriculturists of a rude sort, though others emigrated to the more prosperous colonies of Mexico, Cuba, and Peru, leaving their plantations uncultivated and their houses to go to ruin.

Thus we witness the practical reversion to a wilderness of all that fair land, which at the arrival of Columbus was a veritable Eden, inhabited by people so numerous that, according to Las Casas, it resembled nothing so much as an ant hill covered with ants.



Cloister corridor, monastery of San Francisco, Santo Domingo.

Las Casas accomplished something toward the amelioration of their condition, securing the abolition to some extent of the *encomiendas* and *repartimientos*; but the evil had already progressed so far, even so early as his time, that the people could not recover from their decline. They sank by thousands beneath their accumulated miseries, and finally ceased to exist as an independent people. The only sustained revolt which had a fortunate ending was that led by the Cacique Henrique in 1519. His an-

cestors had long ruled in the mountains of Baoruco, and he himself was educated in the Franciscan monastery of the capital. Indignant at the cruelties of the Spaniards toward his countrymen, and revolting at the inhumanity of the man to whom he was assigned in a repartimiento, he organized the Indians secretly, collected arms from their masters, and fled to the mountains. He and his followers only defended themselves, never attacked; but they kept up the fight for more than ten years, eventually securing a truce, which was kept for five years, and an honorable peace in 1534. There were then remaining about four thousand Indians, and they were assigned lands at Boya, about fifty miles north of the capital. Henrique had been converted to Christianity while in the monastery, and told a missionary that he had never failed to repeat his prayers every day during the long period of revolt, and that he was now happy to conclude a peace, as he desired nothing but justice and freedom from slavery. Here, at Boya, the last of the native Indians of Hispaniola are said to have expired, some time during the seventeenth century; and (as I can sadly testify, having searched the island over for trace of them) there are no people of the aboriginal race remaining in ill-fated Hispaniola.

It may seem a reflection upon our civilization that "a peaceful land has no history," yet such seems to be the truth; and were it not for the appalling fact that this once happy island had been reduced to peace through terrible oppression, we might with pleasure note its condition during the succeeding century, for there was nothing worthy a narration. Still, as Spain

was yet at war, in a desultory way, with other nations, there were some who looked with covetous eyes upon poor, worn-out Santo Domingo. In the year 1655, for example, Admirals Penn and Venables, on their way to the island of Jamaica, made an attack upon the city; but their troops, being repeatedly taken in ambuscades, were driven away. The old writers ascribe their defeat to a cause which certainly never operated before to bring disaster to an armed force, and that was an army of crabs! "The land crabs," says one, "are found here of immense size, and burrow in the sand, at night issuing out in great numbers. On the occasion mentioned above the English landed an ambuscade to surprise the Spanish camp, which, being unprepared, must certainly have fallen. The advanced lines from the boats had already formed, and were proceeding to take post behind a copse, when they heard the loud and quick clatter of horses' feet, and, as they supposed, of the Spanish horsemen, who were very dexterous, and whose galling onset they had experienced the day before. Thus believing themselves discovered, and dreading an attack before their comrades joined them, they embarked precipitately and abandoned the enterprise. But the alarm proved to be caused by these large crabs, which, at the sound of footsteps, receded to their holes, the noise made by their clattering over the dry leaves being that which the English soldiers mistook for the sound of cavalry. In honor of this 'miracle,' a feast was instituted by the natives, and afterward celebrated each year, under the name of 'the Feast of the Crabs,' on which

occasion a solid gold land crab was carried about in procession."

For the last two hundred and fifty years the history of Santo Domingo, island and capital, has been in the main uneventful, and without interest to the world at large. Not that it has been without incident, for the demon of discord has stalked throughout the length and breadth of the land; but it has presented no feature, no aspect, save that of a civilization to be deprecated, a state of government to be avoided. Its morals and motives are, and always have been, the lowest ever tolerated by humanity, always excepting those of the western portion of the island under the government of the Haitian negroes.

Santo Domingo comprises about two thirds of that large and fertile island once known as Hispaniola, and contains a population of about six hundred thousand, mostly mulattoes, with a few white people, all speaking the Spanish language. It passed out of Spanish hands in 1795, for a time reverted to Spain again in 1861, but by a revolt in 1863 regained its "independence," and since 1865 the government has masqueraded as a republic. Under President Ulises Heureaux, who was assassinated in July, 1899, the people endured oppression for years; but at last rose in revolt and placed in power an able executive in the person of General Juan Isidro Jimenez.

Santo Domingo to-day furnishes a striking illustration of what despotism and misrule may accomplish in a land infinitely rich in natural resources; for there are still mountain regions which human

foot has never trod, save that of the Indian or fugitive negro; mines unworked since they were officially closed in 1543, though declared rich a century ago; and vast areas of forest and cultivable lands, only awaiting the coming of a stable government and civilization for their profitable development.



## CHAPTER XII

### BUCCANEERS AND TREASURE SEEKERS

ONE night in June, about the middle of the seventeenth century, a great three-decker galleon was plowing through the Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti. Spain at that time traded with her colonies across the Atlantic by means of a *flota*, or fleet, of galleons, each one of three or four decks, and carrying fifty guns, sailing from Seville. This particular galleon flew the flag of the Spanish vice admiral, and was then on her way home from the Isthmus of Panama, laden with a vast store of gold and pearls from the west coast of South America. Suddenly out of the darkness issued the hail of "Boat ahoy!" and, looking over the towering bulwarks of his ship, the captain of the galleon saw an insignificant pinnace, which he could hardly discern in the gloom. "Get out the crane," he shouted to his under-officer, "and bring the rascals on deck, boat and all, where we can deal with them if they are enemies, and treat with them at our leisure if they are friends." Having thus disposed of the affair, as he thought, the captain went below; but the people in the pinnace, drawing their little craft alongside, made her fast to the gigantic galleon by grappling



irons, and, without waiting the Spaniards' pleasure, swarmed up the side of the ship.

Led by a famous French buccaneer called Peter the Great, they poured over the bulwarks like a torrent, each man with a brace of pistols in his belt, an arquebus slung over his shoulders, and a great knife or cutlass between his teeth. Then the astonished watch saw that the invaders were bloodthirsty pirates, and that they were in danger of losing the ship to these daring rascals; but their discovery came too late. Swiftly, silently, the terrible buccaneers leaped upon the Spanish sailors, stabbing some and braining others with their clubbed arquebuses, until the deck was cleared.

Meanwhile, in the cabin down below, the captain and the vice admiral were indulging in a game of cards and drinking success to their voyage in Spanish wines. A noise as of shuffling feet attracted their attention, and looking up they saw a dreadful apparition on the cabin stairs—a burly pirate standing there, with curling beard and flaming eyes, in each hand a pistol, a shining cutlass between his teeth, and behind him yet other ferocious visages, and more grimy hands stretched out, holding pistols at full cock and pointed at them!

“Santa Maria Santisima!” burst forth the gallant vice admiral. “Did these devils come straight from *infierno*? How gained they the deck?” he demanded of the captain. But this officer was quite speechless from fright, and Peter the Great answered for him: “Never you mind, but show us the hiding place of your treasures!” Humiliated and woe-

begone, his hands tied behind him, and with a pistol held at his head, the vice admiral soon divulged the secret lockers where the pearls and jewels were stored, and then had the sorrow of seeing his beautiful galleon at the mercy of the pirates, who turned her head about and bore up for the island in which they had their headquarters. The galleon was a good sailer, and so, as these buccaneers did not yearn for gore unnecessarily spilled, they gave the Spaniards their pinnace in exchange for the ship, and sent them (as many as could be crowded into her) off to Cuba in this frail and open boat. It was a sorry exchange for the Spanish vice admiral; but what cared the buccaneers? He might thank his stars that they gave him this one chance for his life.

The galleon was brought to anchor inside a line of frothing coral reefs, guarding the south coast of their island. A narrow and tortuous passage led to the landlocked harbor, only to be entered by a skilled pilot; but once within, it was seen that this channel was the gateway to a pirate's paradise.

And this island? It was called and still bears the name of Tortuga. It was Columbus, I think, who first gave it this name—Tortuga de Mar, or the Sea Turtle, because of its shape. Under its lee he obtained shelter from a storm, in December, 1492. It is but a few miles in length, with great cliffs having trees on them growing like ivy against a wall, and one good harbor with two entrances, each with water deep enough for a seventy-gun ship. Around the harbor, completely hidden from the sea, lay the pirate town, where lived the rich-

est planters also, and where the sands were piled high with spoils from many a captured ship. The island furnished an abundance of wood for shipbuilding, wild fruits and vegetables, medicinal plants, wild boars, wild pigeons, land crabs—in fact, almost all that the pirates needed for subsistence and for carrying on their nefarious calling. The only objectionable things were the wild dogs, which they vainly tried to exterminate, and which, like the hogs, were a legacy from Spanish occupation in the previous century.

This taking of the vice admiral's precious galleon was not the first aggressive act committed by the buccaneers, but it was the first important capture they had made. Neither is the story I have related a detached incident in their career, but merely a link in a chain of circumstances by which the Spaniards were eventually placed on the defensive and almost expelled from the Caribbean Sea.

I have told how cruel the Spaniards were to the natives of these islands; how they hounded them and tortured them, until, as an old writer has said, "the name of Spaniard was equivalent to that of murderer." From the first the Spaniards claimed exclusive possession not only of the lands they discovered, but of the adjacent seas; and when, finally, the attention of other nations, particularly of the French and English, was attracted to these rich regions, their seamen and traders were not slow in defying Spanish pretensions. Then, as early as 1600, the Spaniards began a system of persecution, so far as they were able putting a stop to foreign commerce in West In-



**Bohios of the buccaneers.**

dian waters, and seizing all foreign vessels by means of their cruisers on the watch, and which were called *guardia costas*. Their arbitrary seizures and their cruel treatment of prisoners caused the English and French (though these nations were nominally at peace with Spain) to encourage the fitting out of privateers for the purpose of making reprisals on Spanish commerce. They found themselves in need of some place as a depot, or rendezvous, in the West Indies, and chartered companies of both nationalities seized upon the little island of St. Kitt's. The French company was fostered by Cardinal Richelieu, who so persistently combated Spain throughout his career. Every one embarking in this enterprise was required to remain in the island and labor for the benefit of the company during three years in return for his passage out and back; and these became the much-oppressed *engagés*, who were afterward treated as slaves by their original masters, and later by the buccaneers, who obtained possession of them.

The English settlers of St. Kitt's were under Sir Thomas Warner, an enterprising gentleman who labored long and faithfully for the betterment of these islands. As both companies, though of different nationalities, had a bond of sympathy in their hatred of the Spanish, the French and English settlers lived on the island amicably. But it was not long before this settlement on an island claimed by Spain—though it had never been occupied for colonizing purposes—attracted the attention of the Spaniards; and in 1630 a fleet under Don Frederic de Toledo, being at Puerto Rico on its way to Brazil,

was sent to destroy the colonies, so effectually carrying out the purposes of the king that all the settlers were dispersed, and the island left practically depopulated. At the same time the island of Santa Cruz, which had been occupied by Dutch settlers, was attacked, and these various fugitives belonging to three different countries, but all sufferers from Spanish severity, united to form a colony which was a thorn in the side of Spain for many years. Most of them fled to the island of Tortuga, off the north coast of Haiti, and banded together for mutual protection—these French, Dutch, and English fugitives, with the Spaniards as their common enemy.

Thus we see how, in the first place, the Spaniards had excited the horror and aversion of all their Continental neighbors through their inhuman treatment of the American aborigines; in the second place, how they drew upon themselves the united action of the French and English by their arbitrary claims; in the third place, how they cemented together what would otherwise have been harmless colonists into a band of predatory rovers, who preyed upon their ships and commerce. This was the origin of that class of sea rovers known as buccaneers, sprung from the dragons' teeth sown by the Spaniards during their misrule in the West Indies.

At first these wanderers subsisted upon the results of the chase and the little gardens they cultivated in Tortuga; then they went over to the larger island of Haiti, just across the channel, on hunting adventures. Haiti was overrun with wild hogs and cattle, sprung from stock the Spaniards had left there

many years before, and for a long time the Tortugans subsisted upon what these cattle yielded them in hides, tallow, and jerked beef. It seems a sort of poetic justice that those who were destined to bring disaster to the Spanish merchant marine should subsist upon what Spanish settlers had provided. From



Indians boucaning fish.

their peculiar manner of preserving the wild beef, they finally received their generic name of buccaneers. After slaughtering a wild bull or cow, they cut its flesh into strips and smoked it over a slow fire, thus preserving its good qualities—a custom obtained from the Caribs. This process was termed *boucanier* in the Norman-French *patois*, and was corrupted to buccaneer, a name that finally stuck to those that used it. One class of boucaniers hunted the wild cattle merely for their hides, another class speared

the wild boars and pigs for their meat, which they salted down for provisions. While in the forests they lived and hunted in pairs, dwelt in rude huts, or ajoupas, and became almost as shaggy and uncouth as the beasts whose lives they sought.

A second class of these men stayed at home and cultivated the soil, and both classes labored for the support of a third, the spoils of which each shared. The men of this third class went to sea in long boats, which they made from timber of the island, and which the Dutch buccaneers called *flei-botes*, or *frei-botes*; hence their appellation of filibusters, or freebooters. When at last these "brethren of the sea," variously termed buccaneers and freebooters, saw that it was much easier to take a Spanish ship or two than to painfully pursue the wild bulls of Haiti, they adopted their chosen calling with a zest born of honest conviction in its manifold advantages. Peter the Great seems to have been satisfied with his capture of the galleon and sailed for France, leaving the buccaneers leaderless until another Frenchman, named Lolonnois, took upon himself the command. Until this time the buccaneers had refrained from unnecessary bloodshed, contenting themselves with the vast plunder they obtained from the ships; but Lolonnois had already been a captive among the Spaniards, and had experienced their cruelties, so he murdered mainly for revenge. Soon after his arrival at Tortuga he fell in with a vessel sent out in pursuit of him, and, backed valiantly by his courageous buccaneers, he attacked and took it. After having gained the deck and driven the sailors below,



he stood at the hatchway and smote off the heads of the ill-fated Spaniards as they came up, drinking their lifeblood as it spouted from their decapitated trunks!

One of the first of his captures was in the Gulf of Florida, where a Spanish galleon laden with silver had been sunk in a storm. The Spaniards of Cuba had recovered three hundred thousand dollars' worth of the silver, which they had stored away in huts on a desolate cay. The sea rovers surprised the guard they had placed over this treasure, murdered some, drove away the rest, and carried off the spoils. As they were sailing home to Tortuga they fell in with a ship laden with cochineal, indigo, and silver, from which was obtained plunder to the value of sixty thousand dollars. Then, for the second or third time, the beach at Treasure Cove, in Tortuga, was the scene of revelry and debauchery, which lasted until the wretches felt the necessity of setting forth again to replenish their exhausted stores.

And so it went for quite a century. Tortuga was the chosen resort of piratical bands; no sooner would one be driven out or exterminated than another would take possession under an equally brave and ready leader. In 1638, eight years after the first buccaneer settlement here, the Spaniards fell upon the stay-at-homes and murdered every one, so that when the freebooters returned from the sea it was to find only corpses and ruins. Then a French captain and engineer, Le Vasseur, built a fort on the top of a high rock that commanded the port, to which an attacking party could only approach in single file.

This the buccaneers held for many years, and bade defiance to the strongest forces sent out against them by the King of Spain; save on one occasion, when the Spaniards took and kept it for a short time, though it was eventually retaken and its garrison sent to Cuba.

It is known that during the successive occupancies of Tortuga by the various pirate bands great treasure was hidden away in the forest, and in the caves with which the island abounds. Now and again the present cultivators of Tortuga find coins of ancient date, fragments of gold chains, and pieces of quaint jewelry, cast up by the waves or revealed by the shifting sands. It was not without reason that the only harbor of the buccaneers was called Treasure Cove, nor for nothing that they dug the deep caves deeper, hollowing out lateral tunnels and blasting holes beneath the frowning cliffs.

The island now belongs to Haiti, the inhabitants of which have not the requisite sagacity to conduct an intelligent search for the long-buried treasures; and as they resent the intrusion of foreigners, it is probable that the buccaneers' spoils will remain an unknown quantity for many years to come. Treasure Cove is now silent, desolate, and only occasionally visited by negroes, whose ancestors, perchance, served the buccaneers as slaves, and may have assisted in a menial capacity at some of those riotous revels at which hogsheads of wine were opened and stood in the street for all who passed to drink therefrom.

Besides the buccaneers mentioned as leaders, there were others who acquired unenviable fame,

among them one Morgan, a Welshman, who was subsequently knighted by Charles II and became governor of Jamaica. Although "Sir Henry" Morgan was a boon companion of the buccaneers, and acquired his great wealth by murder and massacre, sacking of Spanish cities and torture of men and women, yet when raised to distinction of another sort was most severe upon his former comrades. The buccaneers as a body of men banded for piracy may be said to have passed away with the seventeenth century, and after them came the pirates, who plundered indiscriminately, serving all alike.

We have had a glimpse of the vast wealth lost by the Spaniards in transit from America; but, greatly as the Spanish ships suffered from the buccaneers, they lost infinitely more through storm and hurricane. Add to these the vessels that were sunk through faulty navigation, by being run on reefs and shoals, and we shall find that Spain parted with millions, every year she was engaged in carrying treasure from the New World to the Old.

It is hardly too much to say that nearly every island in the Caribbean Sea, particularly Cuba, the Isle of Pines, Jamaica, and Hispaniola, is girdled with Spanish wrecks containing as yet unrecovered millions and millions in gold and silver. We have not space to describe them all; but in the year 1687, while the buccaneers were in the heyday of their glory, a rich prize was snatched from under their very noses, as it were.

Within a few hundred miles of Tortuga Island, a

native of New England, Captain William Phipps, recovered more than a million dollars from a sunken galleon. From a quaint biography by his renowned contemporary, Cotton Mather, we learn that our hero was born in 1650, and that as a young man he went to Boston, where he married. "He would frequently tell his wife that he should yet be the captain of a king's ship, . . . and that he should be the owner of a fair brick house in the Green Lane of North Boston. . . . By the year 1683, indeed, he became the captain of a king's ship, and arrived back at New England commander of the *Algier Rose*, a frigate of eighteen guns and ninety-five men. . . . He sailed for the West Indies, where he had advice of a Spanish wreck wherein was lost a mighty treasure. Having landed at a Spanish island to careen his ship, his men mutinied; but he quelled the mutiny, and on arriving at Jamaica he turned them off. . . .

"Now, with a small company of other men, he sailed from thence to Hispaniola, where by the policy of his address he fished out of a very old Spaniard a little advice about the true spot where lay the wreck which he had hitherto been seeking—that it was upon a reef of shoals a few leagues to the northward of Port de la Plata [*Puerto Plata*], in Hispaniola. And at length, prevailing upon the Duke of Albemarle and some other persons of quality to fit him out, he again set sail for the fishing ground that had been so well baited half a hundred years before.

"Arriving at Port de la Plata, he made a stout canoe of a stately cotton tree, so large as to carry

eight or ten oars, for the making of which *periagua* (as the natives called it), with the same industry that he did everything else, he employed his own hand and adz, and endured no little hardship, lying abroad in the woods many nights together. This *periagua*, with the tender, being anchored at a place convenient kept busking to and again, but could only discern a reef of rising shoals thereabouts, called the Boilers, which, rising to be within two or three feet of the surface of the sea, were yet so steep that a ship striking them would immediately sink down—who could say how many fathom?—into the ocean. Here they could get no pay for their long peeping into the Boilers. Nevertheless, as they were upon their return one day, one of the men, looking over the side of the *periagua* into the calm water, espied a sea feather growing, he judged, out of a rock; whereupon he bade one of the Indians to dive and fetch this feather, that they might carry home something with them, and make at least as fair a triumph as Caligula. The diver bringing up the feather, brought therewith a surprising story: that he had perceived a number of *great guns* in the water where he had found his feather, the report of which great guns exceedingly astonished the whole company, and at once turned their despondencies for their ill success into assurances that they had now lit upon the true spot of ground which they had been looking for, in which they were further confirmed when the Indian fetched up a *sow*, as they styled it—or a lump of silver weighing perhaps two or three hundred pounds.

“Upon this they prudently buoyed the place, that

they might readily find it again, and then went back unto their captain, whom for a while they distressed with bad news, nothing but bad news. Nevertheless, they so slipped the 'sow' of silver on one side under the table that when he should look that way he should see that odd thing before him. At last he saw it, and cried out with some agony: 'Why, what is this? Whence comes this?' And then, with changed countenances, they told him when and how they got it.

"'Then,' said he, 'thanks be to God, we are made!' . . . And so away they went, all hands to



Old Spanish swords.

work, and most happily they first fell upon that room in the wreck where the bullion had been stored up, and they so prospered in their new fishery that in a little while they had, without the loss of any man's life, brought up thirty-two tuns of silver, for it was now come to measuring silver by tuns!

"But the Spanish wreck, to which Sir William had made his first good voyage, was not the only nor the richest wreck that he knew to be lying under the water. He knew particularly where lay the ship in which Governor Bobadilla was cast away, aboard which there was, as Peter Martyr says, an entire

table of gold of three thousand three hundred and ten pounds' weight. . . .

“ And thou rich table with Bo'dilla lost  
 In the fair Eden of our Spanish coast,  
 In weight three thousand and three hundred pounds,  
 But of pure, massy gold : lye thou, not found ;  
 Safe, since he's laid under the earth asleep,  
 Who learnt where thou dost under water keep.” \*

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\* The *Magnalia Christi Americana*, from which this account was taken, was published in 1702, and as Sir William Phipps had then been dead eight years, in very truth his eulogist entitles these verses his elegy.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CONQUEST OF HAITI

BEFORE we leave Hispaniola let us glance at the western portion of the island, known to the natives as Haiti, or the Highland, which, as it yielded but little gold, was early abandoned by the Spaniards. After wresting from the peaceful aborigines all the precious metal they possessed, and wringing from them all they could dig from the mines and sift from the river sands (having exterminated the Indians in the process), they practically deserted the island for the richer fields of Cuba, Mexico, and the American Main.

Haiti, with its magnificent mountain ranges, its deep and capacious harbors, its hills and valleys clothed in perpetual verdure nourished by the perfection of tropical climates, was a veritable Eden; yet, deprived of its original inhabitants, for more than a century it was practically tenantless. Then the famed buccaneers, who had made their headquarters on the adjacent island of Tortuga, attracted by its beauty and fertility, gave over for the greater part their precarious occupation of seeking Spanish galleons, and took possession of the neglected lands. At first individuals, then groups and companies, settled there, and in 1664, during the reign of Louis XIV



of France, a chartered company of adventurers laid claim to the colony, and, under a Frenchman named D'Ogeron, flourishing settlements were established on the larger island.

They were so strong in 1669 that they sent a force to invade the Spanish part of the island, took the city of Santiago de los Caballeros, and held it until ransomed. The French and Spanish settlers were at war for many years, and in 1691 the latter sacked and burned the town of Guarico, or Cape Haitien, which a hundred years later was destined to be the scene of terrible outrages.

By the Peace of Ryswick, 1697, the French were confirmed in their colonial claims, and from that time until the outbreak of the Revolution Haiti made great material progress. It was at the height of its prosperity from 1750 to 1789: marshes had been drained, forests cleared for the planting of coffee, roads opened along the coast and far into the mountain valleys, and handsome villas built upon the hills and headlands; and in the cities, as at Port au Prince and Cape Haitien, churches, hospitals, aqueducts and fountains, had been constructed. These products of skill and refinement, however, had been founded on slavery; and though the slaves were in the main kindly treated, yet their masters held over them absolute power of life and death. Since 1685 they had been governed under the provisions of the Code Noir of Louis XIV, which edict provided for their humane treatment, though there were frequent examples of terrible cruelty.

We find, in the third quarter of the eighteenth

century, nearly half a million black slaves in Haiti, while at the same time the whites numbered less than forty thousand and the free people of color thirty thousand—an ominous disparity, of which the negroes in bondage were becoming aware. Still, the blacks might have continued submissive for years to come had it not been for the turn of events in France. In May, 1789, at the assembling of the States General, the whites, the ruling people of Haiti, were loyal to France and her king. At the breaking out of the Revolution public sentiment was divided; but when the Assembly proclaimed that not only the white inhabitants of France and Haiti, but also the colored and black, were entitled to freedom and a voice in affairs, the colony was in a ferment. The whites, who had hitherto monopolized all power and official position, forswore their allegiance to the mother country and in ecstasy of rage trampled upon her flag. Encouraged by the *amis des noirs*, or French friends of the blacks, a young man of color, named Vincent Ogé, then residing in Paris, and whose mother owned property in Haiti, sailed for the island with arms and stores in October, 1790, and led an expedition against the planters of the north coast, but was defeated and broken on the wheel. This was the beginning of a veritable reign of terror, rivaling that which soon after existed in France, both precipitated by the Revolution. When that archfiend Robespierre learned of the opposition in Haiti to the declared principles of the Assembly, he exclaimed: "Perish the colonies, then, rather than depart, in the case of our colored

brethren, from these universal principles of liberty and equality which it is our glory to have laid down! ”

The revolution in Haiti may be classed under three distinct divisions: the first was the revolt of the whites against the edict of universal freedom proclaimed by the National Assembly at Paris; the second the mulatto outbreak; the third, the long-dreaded uprising of the blacks, which took place on the night of August 21, 1791. It was on a plantation called Noé, in the parish of Acul, about nine miles from Cape Haitien, that the flood so long expected was let loose, and the black barbarians poured forth to glut their rage in blood and destruction. They came down from the mountains on every side, like an inundation, committing horrible atrocities on the way, one band of miscreants carrying as its standard the body of a white infant impaled on a pike. They swept the hills and mountains with fire and sword, burning dwellings and cane fields, massacring all whites who fell into their hands; and the fury of this horrid rabble host was only spent after more than two thousand men, women, and children had fallen victims to their savagery and a thousand sugar and coffee estates had been destroyed by fire.

All, or nearly all, the white residents of the interior were killed—the *élite* of the island; but in the cities they rallied after the first shock, and finally, with the assistance of the colored people, repulsed the savage mountaineers. The horrors of that uprising exceed belief; they outrage the sensibilities of humanity.

Later on, when the colored people imagined that

the whites had betrayed them, they allied themselves with the blacks, and a veritable war of extermination was conducted. All the planters were massacred or compelled to emigrate and the country districts were given over entirely to the blacks, in whose possession they have since remained. In the mountain



Market square, Cape Haitien.

valleys of Haiti darkness and desolation yet envelop the habitations of semisavage negroes, as ignorant and paganish as their African ancestors, devoted to serpent worship and the cannibal practices of the voodoo.

Anarchy, bloodshed, and dissolution reigned supreme in Haiti until 1793, the natives, the French, and the English (who had come to the assistance of the planters) being engaged in insensate warfare.

Then out of the chaos of strife was evolved a leader for the blacks, the son of an African chief who had been taken in war and sold into slavery. He was born in 1743, on a plantation near Cape Haitien owned by the Count de Breda, and his name was Toussaint. He had taught himself reading, writing, a little geometry, and Latin, and as he became of age he was promoted from the field to the position of coachman by the count's overseer, M. Bayou de Libertas. When the revolt of 1791 occurred, and the black monsters were scouring the country for victims, Toussaint, who was devoted to the overseer, hid him and his family in the forest, taking food to them at the risk of his life, and eventually guiding them to the coast, whence they escaped to the United States, whither he sent them remittances from the plantation so long as it yielded anything. After their flight, having no longer any ties to bind him to the whites, he joined the negro bands, among whom his knowledge, especially of the native plants and medicines and some skill at surgery, made him supreme. The first revolt was led by a gigantic negro named Bouckman, but this savage had been superseded by three other blacks, Jean François, Biassou, and Jeannot. Their character may be inferred from the dreadful acts imputed to the last named, whose custom was to bathe his hands in the blood of his white victims also, and to drink it, exclaiming: "Oh, my friends, how sweet, how good, is this white blood! Let us take full draughts of it while we may!"

Gradually Toussaint, who was known as L'Ouverture, or The Opener, because he had opened a

way to victory and peace, succeeded to the chief command, and the ferocity of the negroes was somewhat mitigated. Declaring himself lieutenant governor of the colony, he resolved to effect a political severance from France; but he wrote the Directory: "I guaranty, on my personal responsibility, the orderly behavior and the good will to France of my brethren, the blacks." At the same time he sent two of his sons, virtually hostages, to be educated at Paris; he kept his pledges, peace prevailed, the British were finally expelled in 1798, and an insurrection of the disaffected mulattoes was quelled.

Then he bent all his energies to the regeneration of Haiti, and he accomplished what no other leader had been able to do: the complete pacification of the island. His army was rigidly disciplined, agriculture was encouraged, churches re-established, schools opened, and strict justice meted out to all. Every ignorant black under him desired and expected a high appointment; but his politic answers to their appeals generally turned them aside. For instance, when an illiterate negro demanded a judicial position, Toussaint replied, "Ah, yes, you would make an admirable magistrate. Of course you understand Latin. No? That is indeed unfortunate, for you know it is absolutely indispensable!"

Toussaint had shown himself not less brave than wise and politic; as, for example, in putting down the insurrection of the mulatto insurgent Rigaud. Falling into an ambuscade in the mountains near Port de Paix, a discharge of musketry sent a shower of balls around him, and his private physician fell dead at

his feet; a plume of feathers in his chapeau was shot away, and shortly after that his coachman was killed in a narrow pass. Yet he seemed, like Napoleon, to bear a charmed life until his work was done; then he fell by indirect attack. In the last insurrection the negro was pitted mainly against the mulatto, in whose veins mingled the blood of the white and the black; but this blood, instead of cementing their interests and friendship, bore in its current the elements of suspicion, envy, hatred, and detestation.

At the beginning of this terrible war there were half a million blacks and not more than seventy thousand whites and mulattoes. Toussaint used to convey this fact most forcibly to his followers by filling a glass with grains of black maize among which were scattered a few grains of white. "You are the black maize," he would say; "the others are the white." Then he shook the glass. "Where are the white grains now?" he exclaimed exultantly. "Lo, they have disappeared!"

In the last year of the eighteenth century peace and prosperity were apparently restored to unfortunate Haiti, and it would seem as though they might continue indefinitely, or at least during the lifetime of Toussaint. At this time, however, he came into collision with the insatiate Bonaparte, to whom, having completely pacified the island, he had sent two letters, addressed, "The First of the Blacks to the First of the Whites," but which the latter did not deign to answer. Meanwhile, Bonaparte had returned from Egypt and overturned the Directory; he was then on his pinnacle, and would

share his honors with no man, black or white. The acts of Toussaint were looked upon as presumptuous; and when the constitution drafted by his council arrived, in May, 1800, by which the colony was to be virtually independent, but under the guardianship of France, with the liberator as governor general for life, his fate was sealed. The First Consul's only answer was the sending of a fleet of sixty ships and thirty thousand men, commanded by General Leclerc, Pauline Bonaparte's husband. Pauline herself was with the general, and Napoleon's enemies have more than hinted that it was as much to rid himself of his importunate sister and her husband of low degree as to reconquer Haiti, that he sent them on this expedition!

Having overcome all opposition at home, Toussaint next proceeded to add to Haiti that portion known as Santo Domingo, and with ten thousand men he entered the capital city on the 2d of January, 1801. When the governor of Santo Domingo handed him the keys of the city, Toussaint said solemnly, "I accept them in the name of the French Republic;" so there was no occasion or excuse for Bonaparte to proceed against him as a rebellious chief; yet one year from that time, or in January, 1802, the ships of France were off the north coast of Hispaniola, and their men and armament were being landed. Anticipating the favorable conclusion of the Peace of Amiens, by which he found his hands free again, with no war in Europe to engage his armies, Bonaparte availed himself of the opportunity for punishing one whom he chose to regard as a rebel against



his authority. It was probably the effect that a free colony like that of Haiti would have upon the slaveholding colonies of France that induced Bonaparte to send out this formidable armament, and to sacrifice upon the altar of his policy and ambitions the veterans of the Nile, of the Alps, and of the Rhine. With Leclerc, besides his beautiful wife, went out several officers, such as Rochambeau, Rigaud, Pétion, and Boyer, all former opponents and enemies of Toussaint, of whom the two last named were destined to succeed him in the government of the island.

To oppose the trained veterans of Napoleon, men who had been accustomed to victory under the master's eye, Toussaint had between sixteen and twenty thousand soldiers only. Learning that the fleet was disembarking a portion of its passengers at the Bay of Samaná, he made his way thither to see for himself what was being done, and, struck with astonishment at what he beheld, exclaimed to his officers: "We are lost! All France is coming to invade our poor island!" The city of Santo Domingo, which had been left in charge of Toussaint's brother, Paul, soon fell into the hands of the French, and landings were effected at Fort Dauphin, at Port au Prince, and at Cape Haitien. Under Toussaint were four brave generals, Clervaux, Laplume, Dessalines, and Christophe, of whom the last two became celebrated as unique figures in the achievement of Haitian independence. Christophe, a native of the island of Grenada, an emancipated black, of majestic presence and towering ambition, was in command at the Cape, and when Leclerc sent him a summons to surrender

he replied to the messenger: "Go tell your general that the French shall march here only over ashes, and that the ground shall burn beneath their feet!" He was true to his word, for, when threatened by sea and by land, and he found defense impossible, he set fire to the city and retreated to the mountain fastnesses, carrying two thousand whites as prisoners. When Toussaint reached the region of the Cape, he was met by multitudes of fugitives, he saw the city in ashes, and, recognizing that events had hurried matters beyond his control, he was overwhelmed with despair and grief.

Soon all the ports were in possession of the French, but the blacks were safe from direct attack in the mountain strongholds. Unassisted, neither side could prevail against the other, so the French commander had recourse to strategy. He had brought with him Toussaint's two sons, to whom Bonaparte had given an interview on the eve of their departure. "Your father is a great man," he had said to them, "and has rendered many a service to France. Tell him I say so, and tell him not to believe I have any hostile intention against the island. The troops I send are not designed to fight the natives, but to increase their strength, and the man I have appointed to command is my own brother-in-law!"

These sons Leclerc now sent to Toussaint, with a demand that he come to him and yield submission, or send his children back as actual hostages. The interview between sons and parents was most affecting, and for a time Toussaint was inclined to

accept the terms, but finally he said: "I can not! The First Consul offers me peace, yet his general no sooner arrives than he rushes into war. No; my country demands my first consideration. Take back my sons!" He intrenched his force at the fort of Crête à Pierrot, and against him marched a French army of twenty thousand men under Rochambeau, whom he at first outgeneraled and defeated with severe loss; but, not receiving the assistance he had expected from his subordinates, he was compelled to retreat. Soon, through conviction that further resistance would be hope-



Toussaint L'Ouverture.

less and being offered advantageous terms by Leclerc, he renounced his command and declared: "I accept everything which is favorable for the people and for the army; as for myself, I wish to live in retirement." He had fought to retain Haiti for France, he had fought against French pretensions; his only thought was for his country.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BLACK KINGS AND EMPERORS

TOUSSAINT retired to his plantation near the Cape, and the island was at peace. But Bonaparte, at a distance, could not know that Toussaint's was the only will that held the blacks in restraint, and sent orders to Leclerc for his arrest and deportation to France. In the dead of night the negro chief was dragged from his bed, two blacks who attempted to defend him being killed on the spot, and taken on board a man-of-war, which at once set sail. Arrived in France, by orders of Napoleon he was separated from his wife and children and confined in a dreary castle on the northern frontier. This was in June, 1802; one morning in the April following Toussaint L'Ouverture was found by his jailer cold in death. Thus miserably perished the one great patriot of Haiti, a victim of Bonaparte's ambition. He died in poverty, having accumulated but little wealth, though with every opportunity for unlimited acquisition. Still, he had maintained a certain magnificence of surroundings and official state, and Bonaparte believed he had vast treasure concealed in the island. When he sent spies to interrogate him, however, Toussaint sadly said, "No; the treasures which you

seek are not those I have lost!"—meaning his wife, children, and liberty.

The deportation of Toussaint was soon recognized as a fatal error; for the blacks, excited and alarmed and no longer having any one to check them, at once flew to arms. The mountaineers again invaded the coast country, led by a ferocious negro, who fought half naked, his only insignia of authority being a pair of epaulets tied to his brawny shoulders. He soon fell, but not before the revolt had spread over the whole island. The great chiefs Dessalines and Christophe were at the outset sullenly obedient to Leclerc, even pursuing and killing bodies of rebellious blacks. They could well afford to be patient, for they now had a terrible ally in yellow fever, which had attacked the unacclimated Europeans and was reaping a dreadful harvest of death. In a short time thousands of soldiers perished, including fifteen hundred officers, many of them famous veterans of Napoleon's Continental wars. The character of the survivors was changed completely, gloom, ferocity, and recklessness taking the place of feelings more in accord with their usual bearing. When at last Pétion and Clervaux threw off their allegiance, spiked the guns of the fort at the Cape and took to the hills, the French garrison was but a few hundred strong. Each side was suspicious of the other, and with good reason. At a banquet given by Leclerc one night the guests were thrown into confusion and alarm by the surly Christophe, who, when pressed by a French officer to drink a glass of wine he had poured out for him, suspecting it might be poisoned, shouted: "Dost

know, thou little white thing, that if I had drunk the wine which thou pouredst out I should have desired to drink thy blood and that of thy general!"

A few days later, indeed, he and Dessalines were investing the city of the Cape with their black sol-



General Jean Jacques Dessalines.

diers, and the ill-fated Leclerc, shut up within the walls, unable to escape by sea because of the loss of his sailors by the plague, himself succumbed to the disease in November, and soon expired. The bereaved Pauline found sailors enough to take her to France, and on arrival at Paris was tenderly embraced by her brother, to whom

she told the terrible story of defeat and annihilation. Napoleon listened in silence, and then said: "Here, then, is all that remains of my fine army: the body of a brother-in-law, of a general, my right arm, a handful of dust. All has perished, all will perish! Fatal conquest! Cursed land! Perfidious colonists! A wretched slave in revolt! These are the cause of so many evils."

Should he not rather have said: "Perfidious Bonaparte, who sent away so many brave warriors, that they might not throw their bayonets across the road to the imperial throne, whither he was urged by his insatiate desires" ?

The command of the French now devolved upon General Rochambeau, the deformed, degenerate son of an illustrious sire who had won glorious laurels in behalf of American independence. Having received re-enforcements enough to bring the number of his troops up to twenty thousand, he spared neither sex nor age in the pursuit of his one purpose—to completely subjugate the blacks. Four hundred captives, it is said, were drowned by his orders, and five hundred more shot and cast into a great pit, the wounded with the dead. To avenge this slaughter of his countrymen, Dessalines took as many French soldiers whom he had captured and hung them on gibbets in sight of their former companions-in-arms. Their exploits in Europe, in praise of which the whole world rang, availed not to save them from ignominious deaths at the hands of black barbarians!

Passion, revenge, lust, and cruelty ran riot over the land, and at last, to crown his infamies, Rochambeau sent to Cuba for Spanish bloodhounds. Three hundred years before, these loathsome companions of degenerate man had been employed by the Spaniards to destroy the inoffensive Indians of this same island, where, sad to relate, a soldier of that nation which has often aimed to lead in modern civilization appeals to the same inhuman means for gratifying his ferocious instincts! An amphitheater was improvised in the

court of a convent, and as an experiment the savage brutes were turned loose upon black men bound to posts, whom they tore to pieces and devoured, amid the acclamations of approving audiences, composed of French "ladies and gentlemen." It is not strange that the half-civilized blacks should have aimed at retributive cruelty, of which many instances might be cited; but one will suffice. The wife of Toussaint's brother, Paul, having been drowned by the French, and without reason, except from insensate revenge, he became mad from grief, and the innocent passengers of a French ship that was wrecked on the coast falling into his hands, he slaughtered them all in front of the city gate, "to the manes of his beloved partner!"

But the time came when Bonaparte could no longer send re-enforcements to fill the gaps death had caused in the ranks of his soldiers so far distant from France. Owing to the breaking out of war between England and France in November, 1803, British ships came to blockade Rochambeau at the Cape; and he was hemmed in between white and black foes. Even then he clung to the hope of rescue, and held out until all his provisions were consumed. Garrison and citizens were reduced to eating horse and mule meat, even the very dogs that had been imported to capture and maim the blacks were killed and eaten! The outer works were carried by the islanders, and they began to prepare hot shot to sink the ships. Then Rochambeau, making a virtue of necessity, surrendered to the British, who thus snatched eight thousand prisoners of war from the very fangs of the rag-



ing, vengeful Dessalines. There is no doubt as to what their fate would have been had this monster gripped them, as exemplified in his massacres of the defenseless French who were left behind.

“As they sailed from the island, Rochambeau and his soldiers saw the tops of the mountains aglow with fires. Aforetime the blaze had been kindled for war and devastation; now the blacks lighted up the highlands in token of their joy. Freedom had been wrested out of the hands of their foes. The dark past was wholly gone; the future was radiant with hope. ‘Freedom! Freedom!’ ran in joyous echoes from mountain top to mountain top, till the whole island shouted ‘Freedom!’ Thus ended that deplorable expedition. In less than two years sixty thousand persons had fallen; fifteen hundred were officers of superior rank, eight hundred were medical men who had given their lives, thirty-three thousand soldiers, of whom not a sixth perished in battle. The attempt at subjugation cost the blacks more than twelve thousand men, of whom about four thousand found death at the hands of executioners.”

On the departure of the French the negro chiefs again proclaimed the independence of the island “in the name of the black people and men of color,” and on the first day of January, 1804, they and the generals of the army, in the name of the people, took a solemn oath to renounce France forever, and to die rather than submit to her domination. But the Haitians had acquired neither freedom nor liberty; only a change of masters!

Jean Jacques Dessalines was named governor

general for life, with power to enact laws, to declare peace or war, and to nominate his successor. No sooner was he firmly seated than, despite his promises and proclamations to the contrary, he proceeded to wreak his vengeance on the few French remaining, and nearly all were murdered. Says an unfortunate resident of the Cape at that time: "That night [the 20th of April, 1804] was a veritable night of horrors. At short intervals we could hear the ax and pick thundering at the door of some devoted neighbor and soon forcing it. Piercing shrieks immediately ensued, followed by a most expressive silence. The next moment the military party were proceeding to some other house, there to renew their work of death.

"There was one act in this terrible tragedy which stamps the conduct of the monster Dessalines with the character of most flagrant perfidy as well as of cruelty. He had not been able to find all his purposed victims, and so issued an announcement that his vengeance was satisfied, and that if those who remained would appear on the parade grounds on a certain day they would receive tickets that would insure them perfect security. Depending upon this offer of amnesty they came forth tremblingly from their hiding places, and appeared as directed, but had no sooner done so than they were seized and led to execution. The slaughter was terrible, and the rivulet which runs through the town was literally red with their blood!"

In a bombastic proclamation Dessalines claimed all the "glory" of this infamous deed: "At length,"

he said, "the hour of vengeance has arrived, and the implacable enemies of the rights of man have suffered the punishment due to their crimes! . . . Yes, we have rendered to those real cannibals war for war, crime for crime, outrage for outrage. Yes, I have saved my country; I have avenged America. The avowal I make, in the face of earth and heaven, constitutes my pride and glory!"

After a futile expedition into Santo Domingo, he returned and ordered a revision of the constitution, by which this "avenger and deliverer of his fellow-citizens" was created a first magistrate, to be called "His Majesty the Emperor," and his "august spouse" (the former mistress of a French planter) was declared "Empress." A constitution was proclaimed; all properties of the whites were declared confiscated to the state; labor was not compulsory, and Haiti became the negroes' paradise. Dessalines was the first black emperor in America, and, like many another American, he could "point with pride" to the fact that he was self-made. At the outbreak of the insurrection that made him prominent he was slave to a negro named Dessalines, and known merely as Jean Jacques. After he rose to the throne he sought out his old master and made him chief butler to his Majesty. When asked if he could not have given him a position more honorable, the emperor replied, "Yes, but nothing the old man would have liked so well; for, while I have a good cellar, yet I drink nothing but water; and he can drink for us both!" The emperor never learned to read, but could sign his name after a fashion. He

employed a reader, however, and used to listen attentively to such papers as were read to him, among them Wilberforce's speeches against the slave trade. He was fond of dress and ornament, and always took a dancing master about with him, though he was very awkward at an accomplishment in which most blacks are so graceful. His reign was short-lived after all, for his troops conspired against him in 1806, and cut him down while struggling to escape; and though he had stipulated that "such children as should be acknowledged by his Majesty" should be known as "princes of the blood," none of them ever appeared to claim a right to the throne.

The second ruler over free Haiti was also a black man, the redoubtable Henry Christophe, who had set fire to the Cape when the French fleet first appeared. He was a man of great military skill, brave and determined, as all his acts have shown. Created "President and Generalissimo of the Military and Naval Forces of the State of Haiti," it was declared by the new constitution that all other titles for the supreme executive were forever proscribed; yet in 1811 he was proclaimed king, under the name of Henry I, and his consort queen. Then were enacted over again the buffoonery and burlesque of royalty that had excited the ridicule of the world during the previous "reign." With the establishment of the throne, the council of state decreed that there should be not only an "hereditary monarchy," but also an "hereditary nobility" as well, composed of all such distinguished persons as had rendered important services to their country, either in the magis-

tracy or the army, or in the departments of literature and science. In literature or science it would be hard to find, even at this day, any Haitian who has distinguished himself; but the army supplied an abundance of material for the "nobility," and the list includes, besides the "princes of the blood," three "princes of the kingdom," eight dukes, twenty counts, thirty-seven barons, and eleven chevaliers. Then there were the "knights of Saint Henry," and the first secretary of state was Comte de Limonade, another high officer being styled the Duc de Marmalade. The Comte de Limonade was "gifted with the pen," and wrote many reams of fulsome proclamations for the edification of a waiting world. Here is one of them, sent forth in the name of "King Henry":

"Free by right, and independent in fact, we will never, no, never, renounce the blessings of liberty; no, never will we consent to witness the subversion of the edifice we have raised and cemented with our blood; at least, without being buried beneath its ruins. . . . King of a free people, a soldier by profession, we fear no war nor enemy. . . . We solemnly declare that we will never become a party to any treaty, or any condition, that shall compromise the honor, the liberty, or the independence of the Haitian people. Faithful to our oath, we will rather bury ourselves beneath the ruins of our country than suffer the smallest infringement of our political rights.

"Given at our palace of Sans Souci the 18th of

September, 1814, in the eleventh year of independence, and the fourth of our reign.

“(Signed) HENRY.

“(By the King) THE COMTE DE LIMONADE,  
“*Secretary of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs.*”

King Henry possessed nine royal palaces and eight royal châteaux, of which the Palais de Sans Souci and the Château des Delices de la Reine were the most beautiful. He carried out Dessalines's plan of defense adopted in the event of another invasion by France. They had sufficient grounds for apprehending that the French would return to avenge their atrocious massacres, in which event they resolved to abandon the coast at the first sign of the enemy, and retreat to forts built in very strong positions in the interior. All the captured artillery, which consisted chiefly of brass cannon in great abundance, was removed to these hill forts, where vast magazines of provisions and ammunition were also collected. The lateral hills and the ravines intersecting them were all cleared and planted with bananas, yams, plantains, and other quick-growing plants producing edible fruits and tubers; water was also provided in cisterns and by means of aqueducts: so that the blacks could have held out for an indefinite period, provisioned and intrenched as they were, in these almost impregnable fastnesses.

Towering above the hill ranges back of Cape Haitien, the visitor to that port may see a pyramidal mountain, cloud-wreathed and lofty: the far-famed La Ferrière, which is crowned by a fortress. I

once visited this vast fortress and the ruined palace of Sans Souci, which are respectively four and two hours' ride from the Cape. Both were built by orders of Christophe when he held the lives of his sable subjects as of little account, and if he had possessed all the resources of modern civilization, I do



A court in Sans Souci.

not believe that either the stern majesty of the one or the perfect beauty of the other could have been exceeded. Crowning the leveled summit of a conical hill, steep and hard to climb, the massive walls of the fortress tower aloft to the height of a hundred feet, surrounded by a wide and deep moat spanned by a decaying drawbridge. Inside are vast galleries, one above another, in which are still mounted more than

two hundred cannon; for Christophe was determined to construct a stronghold in this wilderness which would withstand the attack of any enemy, even of the great Napoleon. No attack was ever made upon this great fortress, and it stands silent to-day, as it has been since its construction. The hundreds of grim cannon and mortars, however, are witnesses to the sanguinary struggle that might have occurred had a foreign foe again invaded the soil of Haiti.

In a most beautiful valley under the hills are the remains of the Palais de Sans Souci, where Haiti's first king held his court, and which was his favorite place of residence. Here the roofless walls, the choked fountains, the dimensions of vast halls, the outbuildings and gardens overgrown with tropical plants, give evidence of the grandeur that once waited on this savage sovereign. The view from the esplanade is entrancing: over a vale filled with plants of the tropics, the gardens and thatched huts of the African natives. After his stronghold was completed, Christophe removed thither with all his treasure, estimated at thirty million dollars, and there felt so secure that, according to tradition, he defied even the Almighty, one day during a thunderstorm discharging his artillery to the din of the elements and flashes of lightning. Within the fortress quadrangle his dilapidated tomb is shown; and in the palace a room where, at the approach of his mutinous guard, he bade farewell to his family, and shot himself through the head with a silver bullet.

Thus much for Christophe, that savage spirit, that acute intelligence, that whirlwind of the insurrec-



tion; the first great sovereign the blacks of America ever had to rule as a despot and reign like a king. He left no descendants to rule in his stead; but one day, as I was crossing a plain near Cape Haitien, I saw the last representative of his "nobility." Mounted upon a small and bony steed was a black man clad in faded regimentals, tattered and torn, with an enormous cocked hat on his woolly head and two great spurs strapped to his naked heels. "That, sir," said my guide, "is the Comte de Limonade!" Not the original one, to be sure, but the present heir to title and estates.

Equally impoverished are the present residents of the city which was built by the French, burned by Christophe, and where resided Leclerc and Pauline Bonaparte when the plague carried off the flower of France's soldiery—Cape Haitien, formerly Cape Français, and once so gay that it was called the "Paris of the West Indies." It is now a wretched ruin, possessing only the remains of former greatness, and without a single suggestion of any art or architecture originating with the blacks. The same may be said of Haiti at large. Nothing, absolutely nothing, has she to show for her century of freedom except the degenerate descendants of those who won it. Idle, apathetic, without ambition, immoral to the core, both in civil life and in politics, the Haitians have not improved their opportunities to show the world what the black man might do when free and independent.

Christophe killed himself in 1820. His "kingdom" comprised only the northern portion of the

island, and his subjects consisted mainly of blacks. His great rival, with whom he was for years at war, was General Pétion, a mulatto, whose capital was at Port au Prince, and who was invested with the title of president of the mulatto republic, which he held until he died, in 1818. He was succeeded by Boyer, another mulatto educated in Paris, who had also come over with Leclerc, and whose father was a tailor, his mother a Congo negress. He availed him-



King Henry I, of Haiti.

self of the confusion consequent upon Christophe's death and invaded the north, where he was well received. In 1822 he was importuned by the Spaniards of the eastern part to make a peaceful entry into their capital; and thus the whole island, for the first time in its history, was united under one government, in which it continued until Boyer's deposition, in 1843.

After him came several rulers of no special importance, all as nominal presidents, until in 1847 one Soulouque, a superstitious and illiterate adherent of the voodoo, or serpent worshipers, declared him-

self emperor under the title of "Faustin I." He revived the old "nobility" of the Limonades and Marmalades; but finally Faustin I became the laughingstock of the civilized world, and even degenerate Haiti was forced to repudiate him. A rebellion was successfully raised by one Geffrard, who followed him a few years later to Jamaica as an exile, both, it was declared, having plundered the island of millions. Salnave, the black soldier, who succeeded the mulatto Geffrard as "president," was shot in the doorway of the national palace by order of his successor, Saget.

Thus they followed each other, these self-elected "presidents" of hapless Haiti, mulattoes and blacks alternating, the last, who imitated Christophe in all but his affectations of royalty, being Hyppolite. He massacred hundreds of people on his road to the palace in 1891, and died in 1897, being succeeded by a "compromise candidate," President-General Sam, also a black man, who reigns in 1900.

The status of Haiti is probably lower than that of any other power in the community of nations. Its people have created absolutely nothing, to fill the place of what they have so ruthlessly destroyed, they have added nothing whatever to the sum of this century's worthy achievements.

## CHAPTER XV

### SANTIAGO AND HAVANA

SANTO DOMINGO was the "mother colony" of the West Indies for many years, and from the island went out the various bands of conquistadores who settled Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica. In the year 1508, acting under orders from the governor of Santo Domingo, Sebastian de Ocampo sailed completely around Cuba, thus for the first time demonstrating that it was an island. He made many interesting discoveries, careened his vessels in the port since known as Havana, and at Cienfuegos, on the south coast, traded with the natives. Of his visit to Cienfuegos Herrera says: "There was Ocampo, very much at his ease, well served by the Indians with an infinite number of partridges like those of Castile, but smaller; and also an abundance of fish called 'lizas,' which were taken from a natural fish pond, where there were millions of them, just as safe as if they were in a tank attached to one's house."

The honor of making the first settlements in Cuba belongs to Don Diego Velasquez, who was created adelantado, and who sailed from the city of Santo Domingo in November, 1511, with four vessels and three hundred men. Among those in his company was one who became more famous than the adelan-

tado—no less a personage than Hernan Cortes, who had come out to the island a young man, and who had been assigned a repartimiento of Indians on the south coast, at or near the present port of Azua, in Anacaona's country.



A cartman of Cuba.

Velasquez first landed at the port of Las Palmas, situated between Guantanamo and Escondido, on the south coast of Cuba; but the first town founded was that of Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion, now known as Baracoa, to the northwest of Cape Maysi, early in 1512. He intended this to become the capital of the island, and appointed civil and ecclesiastical officers;

but after initiating settlements at Bayamo, Trinidad, Batabano, etc., two years later he finally fixed upon the more advantageous site of Santiago de Cuba.

There, on the slopes of the hills facing a magnificent bay, six miles from the sea, amid most beautiful surroundings, the city of San Diego, or Santiago, named after the patron war saint of old Spain, was founded in 1515. The situation was commanding and well chosen, for the entrance to the bay was guarded by natural fortifications and connected with the sea by a channel barely a hundred yards wide. Not many years later the natural ramparts were crowned with walls of solid masonry, and by degrees rose the tower and buttressed bastions of the Morro, which has resisted many an attack, and has frowned upon its foes through more than three centuries. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the castle has witnessed many an encounter between buccaneer pinaces and bulky galleons, swift-sailing pirate ships and Spanish men-of-war; in the eighteenth century it felt the shock of broadsides from three-deck frigates, and in the nineteenth trembled from the impact of tons of metal thrown from American battle ships. Yet it still stands, as of yore, defiantly crowning the vast gray cliffs, its ramparts seamed and broken, its sentry turrets appearing ready to topple into the roaring waters beneath, but apparently to endure almost as long as the rock itself.

When for the first time I approached Santiago's harbor mouth, dominated by its rugged, gray, and stern old towers, I was reminded of some ancient fortifications I had seen on the coast of Spain, as,

for instance, Malaga and its ruined fortress line running up the hill to the Gibalfaro. Very few of Cuba's forts are of modern construction; for it was only during the period of the Mexican and Peruvian conquests, when streams of gold and silver were flowing to the home country, that Spain could expend such vast sums in her colonies as these works necessitated.

Santiago and Havana may be said to present Cuba's most interesting history in epitome; the former especially that of its earliest years. Hither came, in company with Velasquez, not only Cortes but also Las Casas, and both sailed hence on important missions—the one to his famed conquest of Mexico in 1519 and the other to plead in Spain the cause of the Indians. Cortes was not the first to go hence to golden Mexico, for ill-fated Grijalva had sailed thither the year previous and discovered the country. Cortes was at one time mayor of Santiago, and owned a repartimiento of Indians, whom, in his endeavors to raise sufficient funds for fitting out his Mexican expedition, he worked so cruelly in the mines of Cobre as to kill a great many.

The first copper mines ever worked by Europeans in America are in the Santiago district, and were successfully operated by Velasquez as early as 1514. Their patroness, the Virgin of Cobre, who has a feast day every September (the 8th), has in her shrine jewels so valuable that they are famous throughout all Cuba. Copper and iron are yet found here in quantities, and the latter of such fine quality that it is sought from far and near. One of the curious in-

cidents of the siege of Santiago in 1898 was that some of the American battle ships which threw shot and shell into the city and harbor were belted with plates made from iron out of Santiago's mines!

Although the entrance to Santiago harbor is so obscure as almost to merit the name bestowed upon another near, of Escondido, or Hidden, yet it was soon found by Spain's enemies, and many a naval engagement has been fought within. A fierce fight, which was continued for two days, took place in 1537 between a Spanish vessel and a French privateer that had arrived in the bay. Each day they fought and each night the respective commanders ceased firing and exchanged courtesies. In the morning at sunrise the combat was resumed, but without any result until the third night, when the privateer gave up the fight and crawled out of the harbor.

In 1553 the city was captured by four hundred French arquebusiers, who held it for a month, until a ransom of eighty thousand dollars was paid. As late as 1592 piratical attacks were so frequent that the inhabitants were often obliged to seek refuge in Bayamo, some distance in the interior. Until near the end of that century, Santiago was held to be the capital of Cuba, but when, in 1608, the cathedral was ruined by an earthquake, the bishop removed to Havana and carried his authority with him. In the quarrel that ensued the bishop had the captain general excommunicated, and all the clergy of the city went in procession to curse him and to stone his house. Two hundred years later, in 1810, a marble slab was taken from the ruins of the ancient cathe-



dral bearing an inscription to the effect that the remains of Don Diego Velasquez, the first explorer and conqueror of Cuba, were buried there. This fact revived the stories current at one time of his cruelty, when the poor Indians were slaughtered by him and his companions without mercy. They soon went the way of those in Haiti; whole companies of them committed suicide to escape the tortures of the Spaniards, and hundreds of them were massacred without cause.

During the frequent wars between Spain and England the latter power always sent her war ships to the West Indies and to Cuba as offering vulnerable points of attack, and thus the poor colonists were made the victims of their home country's policy. In 1662, for example, the English, under Lord Winsor, attacked Santiago, landed eight hundred men at Aguadores, marched upon and took the city, carried off church bells, treasure, slaves, guns from the forts, and blew up the Morro itself, hitherto considered impregnable. It was rebuilt, however, in 1663, and at the same time supplemented by the forts and batteries of Santa Catalina, La Punta, and La Estrella, all which were vainly bombarded by the Americans in 1898.

With all these evidences of Santiago's antiquity before us it does not seem improbable that, as the story goes, the ribs of a galleon which once sailed with Spain's mighty armada lie at the bottom of its harbor. How they got there no one seems to know; but it is certain that Sir Francis Drake, who bore so conspicuous a part in defeating that armada in 1588,

was frequently prowling about in these waters. He lost a ship to a Spanish admiral off the Isle of Pines in a notable encounter, and the Cubans were constantly in dread of his coming.

We shall present in briefest outline only the great events which have so recently happened here, because so many pens of late have made them familiar to all. It should be recalled, however, that Santiago was the "storm center" of the war that ended in the expulsion of Spain forever from American waters, and wrested from her the colonies she had founded in the sixteenth century. Citizens of the United States have been several times involved in Cuban uprisings as individuals, without the sanction of their Government, and notably in what is known as the "Virginius affair," in 1873. The *Virginius* was an American ship which sailed clandestinely to the aid of the Cubans, and was taken on the high seas off Jamaica by a Spanish man-of-war. She was brought to Santiago, and within a few days her master, Captain Fry, and forty-eight of her crew and passengers were summarily shot. This barbarous proceeding aroused even the lethargic United States, and diplomatic intercourse between our country and Spain was on the point of rupture, when the Spanish Government made a tardy disavowal of the whole affair, promised to restore the ship to its owners, and to salute our flag if in the wrong. It was found to be morally wrong, though technically within its international rights, and the salute was dispensed with. The *Virginius* was taken away in charge of an American crew, but in such a filthy and

unseaworthy condition that there was great relief when she foundered off our coast before reaching port.

It was charged at the time that our Government had ordered her scuttled at sea to avoid international complications; but I can state, from my own experience, that, whether or not this was true, the storm which prevailed the night she went down was sufficient to sink any ordinary craft, short-handed as she was, for I happened to be within its radius (and if the weather had been clear should have been within sight of the ship) when she sank. This occurrence made an indelible impression upon my memory, and it was with sad interest that, years afterward, I viewed the dead wall of the slaughter house against which those unfortunate men of the *Virginus* were stood up to be shot, in the city of Santiago.

Provided such a deed must needs be avenged, then it has been requited, and by Americans; for it was here that Spain was reduced, at one fell swoop, to a third-rate power, by the victories won by our soldiers and sailors in June and July, 1898.

After war was declared between the United States and Spain in April, 1898, two months of hurried preparations ensued, and it was not known at what point troops or ships would come into collision. The sailing of Admiral Cervera's fleet from the Cape de Verde Islands for the West Indies left our nation in suspense for weeks, as it was not known what portion of our coast might be the object of attack. When, finally, word came that the fleet had taken coal at Curaçao, the country breathed more freely,



The Cuban volante.

since it was then seen that the Spanish objective was probably Cuba or Puerto Rico, and the coast of our mainland was at least safe for the time. The two American fleets that had been assembled, the one engaged in the blockade of Havana under Admiral Sampson and the flying squadron at Newport News under Schley, were ordered to converge in the channel south of Cuba; but it was not until much valuable time had been wasted that the mystery of Cervera's movements was penetrated by a daring reconnoissance, which disclosed his fleet safely ensconced in Santiago's harbor.

To brave Lieutenant Blue belongs the honor of this achievement, and, now in full confidence that the enemy would be captured in time, our war ships assembled off the harbor mouth within sight and shot of grim old Morro. This act of Cervera's, in seeking shelter at a Spanish port, when he might easily have ravaged some portion of our Continental coast, at once determined the theater of war. All our energies were devoted to concentrating troops and war ships at this point, and before the last of June the battles of El Caney and Las Guasimas had been fought, the storming of San Juan Hill had proved the valor of our soldiers, and Santiago itself had been invested. Then followed Cervera's desperate dash for liberty from the harbor of Santiago, and the swift demolition of his gallant ships by the watchful Yankees off the harbor entrance. By the destruction of this fleet of Spanish war ships, the second naval victory of the war was won by the Americans (the first being that of Manila) with the loss of but a single

man. Shattered and smoking wrecks upon the Cuban coast, lay the flower of Spain's navy, and one of her most gallant admirals, together with hundreds of her sailors, were our prisoners. All this occurred on the 3d of July, and it was a most memorable "Fourth" that was celebrated in the year 1898, when the rumors were confirmed of the total destruction of the Spanish fleet.

The fall of Santiago followed, as a matter of course, on the 17th of July, and all the eastern province came into our possession. According to the terms of capitulation, the twenty thousand soldiers comprising the garrisons were repatriated at our expense; but still there were more than a hundred thousand Spanish fighting men on Cuban soil, and the work of expulsion was considered to have just begun. The genius of the United States was now thoroughly aroused, but had hardly put forth its energies when we were astounded by a proposition from Spain for the cessation of hostilities.

So it is around Santiago that associations now cluster which have become interwoven with our country's history. Down by the water side is the stark wall where the men of the *Virginius* met their doom; not far distant is the harbor mouth where Lieutenant Hobson and his seven companions sank the *Merrimac* and won undying fame; over the hills are the heights of San Juan and El Caney, where American soldiers wiped out whatever stain of blood may have been imprinted upon their flag in years gone by. For many years Americans had been subjected to insult and contumely at the hands of the arrogant

Spaniards; but when once they sprang to arms, in a single, short campaign they not only caused the downfall of Santiago and the Morro, but sent Spain herself tottering to her fall.

The final blow was dealt at Santiago, and with the surrender of that city and province passed the virtual possession of the island to the Americans; for Havana, though girdled with forts and castled fortresses, and the headquarters of a captain general in command of more than a hundred thousand men, came to us without the firing of another gun.

The name of Havana was first applied to the present port of Batabano, on the south coast of Cuba, which was founded in 1514, but transferred to the north coast in 1519. The landing place of the first colonists is to-day indicated by a small chapel, and a scion of the original ceiba tree beneath which the event was celebrated. Ships sailing between Spain and Mexico soon after touched here, and from its commanding situation and superexcellent harbor it came to be called "The Key of the New World." Commerce quickly found it out, and also those parasites of commerce, the buccaneers, who as early as 1528 sacked and burned the city. On account of its value, the King of Spain ordered two great castles built, as a protection to the town, and work was begun at once upon the Bateria de la Punta and the Morro, under a celebrated Italian engineer. These important fortifications, which command the harbor entrance on either side, may still be seen; but though begun more than three hundred and sixty years ago,

they were still in an unfinished state when threatened by Drake in 1585. His advent again, in 1592, hurried these slow-moving Spaniards somewhat; but in 1628, when the city was attacked by Dutch pirates, the forts were far from being completed.

In addition to being constantly the object of attacks from Spain's enemies, Havana also suffered severely from hurricanes and fires in later years, as in 1768, 1802, 1810, and 1846. On the 10th of October, 1846, the island was swept by the most violent hurricane ever known in its history, eighteen thousand dwellings being destroyed—five thousand five hundred in Havana alone. A vast territory was ravaged, more than one hundred coasting vessels were wrecked, and hundreds of people were killed. Again, about twenty years later, the island and city were storm swept, with great loss of life and shipping; yet Havana has survived all the attacks of buccaneers, pirates, filibusters, fire, and hurricane, and when it passed from Spanish to American hands, in 1898, was one of the finest cities in tropical America.

In a review of the many great events that have taken place here, we should not lose sight of two expeditions made to Florida—by Pamphilo de Narvaez in 1528, and by Ferdinand de Soto in 1539. De Soto was, as is well known, governor general of Cuba at the time he fitted out his ill-starred expedition to Florida, and it was from the harbor of Havana that he sailed forth on the voyage that ended in the discovery of the Mississippi and his burial beneath its waters. Hither, it is thought, was brought Ponce de Leon in 1521, wounded by an arrow from the bow





Havana in the seventeenth century.

of a Floridian, and here he died. Though politically separated for years, yet many traditions of Cuba and Florida have been common to both, through the adventures of Spaniards in the sixteenth century.

Though many times menaced, Havana had remained essentially a Spanish possession until the closing years of the present century. In 1534, and again in 1554, it was taken by the French; in 1624 by the Dutch; but each time was restored to Spain. Its most critical period was in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when the English assailed Spain's holdings in the West Indies with the intention of permanent occupancy. Had Great Britain carried out her diplomatic schemes of that time, doubtless the history of the Western Hemisphere would have been radically different from that which we know; but she has always acted in a half-hearted manner with respect to the West Indies, and though she has expended vast treasure and shed British blood without stint, yet her possessions there to-day are comparatively insignificant. Not alone British, but American blood, has been spilled in Britain's attempts to humble Spain through the conquest of her Cuban colony; indeed, it cost our colonies thirty thousand men, as well as sixteen million dollars, to take Havana in 1762. That midsummer expedition, by which the English under Lord Albemarle invested Havana and finally captured it, was the second attempt of the kind undertaken with the assistance of eminent Americans. In the first, which was futile, twenty years earlier, a brother of George Washington, Major Lawrence, was engaged; and he afterward

named, in honor of the commander of that expedition, the famous Virginia plantation, Mount Vernon, which later came into the possession of our honored first president.

The second siege was the event of the century in the West Indies, and ended, after almost incredible suffering on the part of the besiegers, in the fall of the forts and the capture of the city. As in the more recent occupation of the Cuban capital by the military forces of the United States, British occupancy resulted most favorably for the Havanese, for the city was cleansed of its impurities, the ravages of the endemic fevers were checked, and commerce, unrestricted by arbitrary laws, swelled to unwonted proportions.

The next year England gave up her dearly bought possession in exchange for Florida, and it has come about that, in the providence of God, the blood of the American colonists was not shed in vain after all; for one hundred and twenty-six years later their descendants marched into Havana without the direct loss of a life or the firing of a gun. Before the end of December, 1898, the island had been cleared of Spanish troops, and all its provinces, cities, towns, and forts were in American hands, to be held in trust for the Cubans until a stable government should be established.

The loss to Spain of a colony which had been hers for four hundred years impels us to seek a reason for this momentous event. In a word, it was cruelty. From the very first the Spaniards treated their American subjects with unprecedented sever-



A milkman of Havana.

ity: at the outset the unfortunate Indians, then their successors the native-born settlers. All the West Indian islands, particularly Cuba and Puerto Rico, have been considered merely fields for the exercise of official rapacity and extortion, treated as conquered provinces. The result has been a condition of unrest, which has shown itself in numerous rebellions and filibustering expeditions. The most extensive rebellion was that known as the "Ten Years' War" (1868-'78), and which, after terrible cruelties had been perpetrated, was brought to an end by a treaty, which was perfidiously violated by Spain. The Cubans did not obtain those concessions to which their valor had entitled them, and seventeen years later, in 1895, inevitable war again broke out and ravaged the island. The leaders were Gomez, Garcia, and Maceo, and they pursued the same tactics as in the previous war, rarely coming to close quarters with the enemy, but carrying on a guerrilla warfare. They obtained no great successes in the field, but had driven the Spaniards mainly within the shelter of a few forts and cities. "Butcher Weyler" was carrying on his barbarous policy of extermination by causing the *reconcentrados* to starve in the settlements. This state of affairs might have lasted for years had not a crisis occurred.

That crisis in Cuban affairs was the blowing up of the United States battle ship Maine in the harbor of Havana—a dastardly massacre of two hundred and sixty American officers and sailors. It was the wreck of the Maine that caused the total collapse of Spanish hopes in Cuba; for the intervention of the United

States, and that short though bloody campaign in the summer of 1898, drove the Spaniards from the island which for centuries had bled beneath their merciless

oppressions. Not long before a Spanish premier had declared that there was not money enough in the United States to purchase Cuba, nor power enough to take her; yet within one hundred days from the declaration of war she was in American hands, and the first day of January, 1899, saw the last of Spanish soldiers on this side of the Atlantic.



A fair Havanese.

The month of July, 1898, was a memorable one to Cuba, for then she

realized the aims for which she had fought many years; to Spain, also, for then ceased her dominion in the West Indies; to the United States, for then was proved the valor of her soldiers and her magnanimity as a nation.

## CHAPTER XVI

### JAMAICA AND THE MAROONS

JAMAICA, like Cuba and Haiti, retains its aboriginal name, which signifies a land of springs, or of woods and waters. It is a land of mountains also, the highest, or Blue Mountain Peak, reaching an altitude of more than seven thousand feet. The island was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, in 1494, but is more particularly identified with his fourth, and last, which extended from 1502 to 1504, and was the most disastrous of all. We have noted that Columbus touched at Hispaniola on this voyage, where he warned the governor of an approaching hurricane; that his advice was disregarded, Bobadilla's fleet being wrecked in the storm; and that his own little squadron was in great danger on the south coast of that island. Having been forbidden to land anywhere on the coast of Hispaniola, Columbus steered for Veragua, where, after repeated failures to found a settlement, he at last was driven by a great storm to the south coast of Cuba, whence, with his vessels in a shattered and sinking condition, he sought the north shore of Jamaica. This north coast has many good harbors, and into one of these, which he called Porto Bueno, he sailed with his sinking ships. A little later, with-



Saint Ann's Bay, near Christopher's Cove, Jamaica.



drawing his craft from this harbor, he entered a small bay and ran them ashore on the sands, where he was kept a prisoner for more than a year by the combined forces of the elements and the hostile natives. The bay in which he stranded his vessels is still known as Don Christopher's Cove, and one day I visited and photographed the scene of this the saddest episode in the life of Columbus.

Running the vessels upon the shore, Columbus propped them in an upright position, then built a thatched roof over the decks, and thus "castled in the sea," as he terms it, he remained in this spot a long and weary twelvemonth. At first the Indians, who were allied to those of Haiti but more fierce and warlike, were inclined to pity his misfortunes and supply him with fresh provisions; but at last they became rebellious and refused longer to render assistance. Then it was, if we may believe the accounts transmitted to us, that he gained by artifice what he could not obtain by force or entreaties. He knew from his calculations that an eclipse of the moon was soon to occur, and he employed this knowledge to impress the Indians with an idea of his importance. He told the chief that he had control over the celestial bodies, and that if his supplies were not renewed at once he would remove the light of the moon forever from the island. The Indians scoffed at this threat, but when at the time mentioned the moon's glory was obscured they came and entreated him to cause the Queen of Night to return to her place in the heavens. As they promised to give the Spaniards all the supplies they needed,

Columbus pretended to relent, and after retiring to his cabin came forth and assured them that their prayers had been answered, and all would be well again if they fulfilled their agreement. This they gladly did, and thenceforth there was no danger from famine. But another danger threatened in the revolt of a portion of the crew, under two brothers named Porras, who led their followers off to ravage and destroy.

A brave young Spaniard, Diego Mendez, volunteered to go in a canoe to Hispaniola and apprise the governor of their perilous position, and this he succeeded in doing, after terrible exposure in crossing the channel; but the vile Ovando purposely withheld succor from his imperilled countrymen for nearly a year, and meanwhile Columbus despaired of being rescued. It was while thus a prisoner, and in suspense, that he wrote a last appeal to his sovereigns, in a letter dated Jamaica, 1504. It begins: "Diego Mendez, and the papers I send by him, will show your Highnesses what rich mines of gold I have discovered in Veragua, and how I intended to have left my brother at the river Belen if the judgments of Heaven and the greatest misfortunes in the world had not prevented it. However, it is sufficient that your Highnesses and your successors will have the glory and advantages of it all, and that the full discovery and settlement are reserved for happier persons than the unfortunate Columbus. If God be so merciful as to conduct Mendez to Spain, I doubt not but he will convince your Highness and my great Mistress that this will not only be a

Castile and Leon, but a discovery of a world of subjects, lands, and wealth greater than man's unbounded fancy could ever comprehend or avarice itself covet; but neither he, this paper, nor the tongue of mortal man can express the anguish and afflictions of my body and mind, nor the misery and dangers of my son, brother, and friends. Already have we been confined ten months in this place, lodged on the open decks of our ships that are run ashore and lashed together; those of my men that were in health have mutinied under the Porras of Seville; my friends that were faithful are mostly sick and dying; we have consumed the Indians' provisions so that they abandon us; all, therefore, are likely to perish of hunger, and these miseries are accompanied by so many aggravating circumstances that render me the most wretched object of misfortune this world shall ever see: as if the displeasure of Heaven seconded the envy of Spain, and would punish as criminal those undertakings which former ages would have acknowledged as great and meritorious actions! "

These repinings of Columbus were born of his well-founded distrust of both King Ferdinand and the governor of Hispanolia; yet his undaunted spirit still held to the glory of his great discoveries, which the world has since confirmed and acknowledged in full measure.

Columbus was at last rescued by a party grudgingly sent out by Ovando, who purposely delayed, hoping that meanwhile the shipwrecked mariners would perish; received with pretense of honor at Hispaniola, and sent to Spain, where he arrived only

to learn of the last illness and death of Queen Isabella, his sole friend at court.

Columbus never made another voyage, being slighted and contemptuously treated by King Ferdinand, and died two years later, in 1506. Even the empty titles which were promised him by his sovereigns were withheld from his family, until finally Don Diego, his son, wrested them from Ferdinand by legal process; and years later his grandson, Don Luis, received the title of Duc de Veragua and Marquis de la Vega—the one from the region discovered on that last voyage, the other from another province in the island of Jamaica, where the second city was founded.

It was in 1503 that Columbus underwent that terrible experience in Jamaica, but not until twenty years later, or in 1523, was the first settlement founded there by the Spaniards. That year a city was begun near Santa Gloria, now Saint Ann's, and called Sevilla Nueva. In a few years it became an important town; a cathedral and a monastery were designed for it, the abbot of which latter was afterward the famous Peter Martyr of Angleria, author of *De Orbe Novo*, which contained the first published account of the discovery of America. Sevilla Nueva long since fell to ruin, and the only remains of it to-day are a few hewn stones and mounds of earth. In 1688 Sir Hans Sloane, who came to Jamaica with the Duke of Albemarle, wrote *The Natural History of Jamaica*, and was the virtual founder of the British Museum, reported the existence of extensive ruins here. But about 1530, from some

cause, the Spaniards abandoned the north side of the island and went to the southwest, where they laid the foundations of San Jago de la Vega, now called Spanish Town.

The Spanish occupation continued for a century and a half, but there are few reminders of it now. Don Diego Columbus is the reputed founder of Sevilla; and the title of his son, Don Luis, is perpetuated in the marquisate of La Vega, or the plain in which Spanish Town stands; there is a town called Porus, after the Spaniards (Porras) who mutinied against Columbus; and the Pedro River reminds us of Don Pedro Esquimel, at one time governor of Jamaica and a cruel oppressor of the Indians.

If the Spaniards had been humane and observant of international rights, Jamaica might long have remained in their possession; but the same causes that operated against them in the fitting out of privateers and the encouragement of buccaneering now worked their ruin in this island. A treaty had been signed between Spain and England in 1630, but the Spaniards had not observed even the first article of it, which was "that there should be peace, amity, and friendship between the two crowns and their respective subjects in all parts of the world." Though publicly professing friendship with England, yet the Spaniards privately reserved the right to oppress all English subjects found by them in the seas or territories discovered by Columbus. They chased English ships, placed English seamen in the stocks and sent them to the galleys. In one instance, according to Sir Walter Raleigh, they murdered a

crew of twenty-six Englishmen by tying them back to back and then cutting their throats. They drove the French and English out of Saint Kitt's in 1630 (while the treaty was being signed), out of Tortuga in 1638, and out of Santa Cruz in 1650, practicing on them the same outrageous cruelties as were inflicted upon the Indians. When at last sturdy Oliver Cromwell attained to power, he instituted inquiries into these outrages, and entered protests, assuring the King of Spain, through his minister in London, that he should demand freedom from the practices of the Inquisition and free sailing in the West Indies. To these demands the minister replied that "to ask liberty from the Inquisition and free sailing in the West Indies *was to ask his master's two eyes*; and that nothing could be done on those points but according to the practices of former times."

Cromwell rejoined, in effect, in the words of another: "I know of no title that the Spaniards hath but by force, which by the same title may be repelled. And as to the first discovery—to me it seems as little reason that the sailing of a Spanish ship upon the coast of India should entitle the King of Spain to that country as the sailing of an Indian or English ship upon the coast of Spain should entitle either the Indians or English unto the dominion thereof! . . . The Spaniards have contravened the Treaty of 1630. War must needs be justifiable when peace is not allowable." At all events, Cromwell proceeded against the Spanish colonies in the West Indies in order to maintain the prestige of

the British name, which had been so foully sullied in the reign of Charles I. He caused to be fitted out a great expedition, under the command of Admiral Penn, father of our famous William, the land forces of which were under General Venables. This expedition was at first unsuccessful in an attempt upon Hispaniola, but the Spaniards in Jamaica promptly capitulated on the 11th of May, 1655.

The Spaniards made an attempt to regain the island a few weeks before Cromwell's death, but were driven away, never to return. When Charles II came to power again, Spain made a plausible plea for its restoration to her on the ground that it had been captured by rebel subjects of the English crown; but the king, while willing enough to disavow the acts of Cromwell, was equally ready to profit by his prowess in the fields of war as well as of diplomacy, and refused to part with it.

Through the efforts of the Protector several thousand Irish and colonial settlers were induced to emigrate to Jamaica, and as they were not disturbed by Charles, even though some of them had been active in securing his father's execution, the island soon became quite populous and prosperous. A great measure of its original prosperity was due to the gathering there of the buccaneers from Tortuga, and it was not long before Port Royal, the chief harbor, became the liveliest city in the West Indies.

Chief among the degenerate buccaneers was one Henry Morgan, a Welshman, who had risen to prominence by deeds of blood, by captures of Spanish

ships, and the sacking of Spanish cities, like Cartagena, Puerto Bello, and Panama. By treachery and murder he had acquired an immense fortune through the connivance and partnership (it was openly charged) of King Charles II himself. At any rate, after he had served as lieutenant governor of the island (during the absence of the governor, the Duke of Carlisle), he went to England and was most honorably received by the king, who conferred upon him the honor of knighthood, so that to history he is known as Sir Henry Morgan. His great predecessors, Drake and Hawkins, had come to the West Indies with knightly honors adorning their brows, and had won distinction despite their handicap of title; but "Sir Henry" won his spurs through dastardly deeds, bloodstained and smelling of the gallows, and thus earned the favor of royalty. The old proverb, however, of "set a thief to catch a thief" was well illustrated in his case, for while he was deputy governor the poor buccaneers fared exceedingly ill at his hands. He knew their haunts and he knew their ways, and so pursued them without mercy, hanging some and shooting others, until at last not enough were left to form a "corporal's guard." While they lived, however, and while piracy and buccaneering were profitable, how they made the streets of Port Royal resound with their revelries, and enriched Jamaica with plunder derived from the Spaniards!

This port was known as the wickedest as well as the richest city in the islands, and it was considered by many as a judgment from Heaven that before



the century ended it was nearly destroyed by an earthquake. It was in that memorable year of 1692, about midday, the 7th of June, that the sands upon which Port Royal was built slipped into the sea, carrying with them vast piles of rich merchandise, warehouses and dwellings, a church, the fortifications, and hundreds of unfortunate people, who were engulfed by the waves.

Almost as many people perished of the pestilence generated from the mutilated corpses floating in the bay as by the earthquake, so that the calamity was felt all over the island. In an old cemetery on the opposite side of the bay was one tombstone that bore this quaint epitaph: "Here lies the body of Lewis Galdy, Esquire, who departed this life at Port Royal, the 22d December, 1736, aged 80 years. He was born at Montpelier, France, but left that country for his religion, and came to settle in this island; where he was swallowed up by the great earthquake in the year 1692; and by the providence of God was, by another shock, thrown into the sea and miraculously saved by swimming, until a boat took him up. He lived many years after in great reputation, beloved by all who knew him, and much lamented at his death."

Port Royal may have contained, as one of its survivors, a clergyman, remarked, "the most ungodly people on the face of the earth"; but nothing of the sort was alleged of another place that was swallowed up by the sea in a similar manner fifty years later. This place was Savana la Mar, in the parish of Westmoreland, which was swept by a tidal

wave during a fierce hurricane, and not "a vestige of man, beast, or habitation left behind."

Another memento of the Port Royal earthquake, preserved in the museum of the Jamaica Institute, is the bell of the church which was destroyed at that time. It is said that to-day, when the sea is calm, one may see the ruins of the houses submerged on that awful day in June, 1692.

At the time Cromwell's soldiers wrested Jamaica from the Spaniards there were few if any Indians remaining. Despite their bravery and intelligence, the aboriginal inhabitants were soon driven to the mountains and finally exterminated. In caves and ravines to-day are frequently found relics of those people, in the shape of celts and pottery, fragments of canoes, and skeletons. The English conquered the Spaniards and drove them from the island, but their negro slaves, to the number of about two thousand, fled to the mountains, where they persistently stayed, resisting every species of blandishment and every attempt to re-enslave them. There they and their descendants maintained themselves, even though the best of British soldiery chased them about at intervals for more than a hundred years.

As early as 1656 one of the British officers reported to Cromwell that "they must either be destroyed or brought in upon some terms or other, or else they will prove a great discouragement to the settling of the country." And, indeed, his prediction was soon verified, for they were continually on the warpath, constantly waylaying the unus-

picious soldiers and committing massacres. In 1663 they were offered a full pardon, twenty acres of land apiece, and freedom from all manner of slavery, if they would surrender; but having unrestricted range of a vast tract of interior country capable of supporting thousands, they did not accept these conditions. Eighty years after the conquest, between 1730 and 1740, these "Maroons" had become so insolent in their depredations that two full regiments of regular troops, besides all the militia of the island, were sent to subdue them; but never took a prisoner, and killed but few of these wary blacks.

Their leader at that time was an uncouth dwarf named Cudjoe, and their retreat in the fastnesses of the John Crow Mountains was called Nanny Town, after his favorite wife. Cudjoe was a pagan, and, together with all his followers, worshiped the African deities of Obeah, or the gods of sorcery-working wizards. Deep down in a romantic gorge where two rivers meet, after plunging their waters over a rock nine hundred feet in height, in a seething caldron called "Nanny's Pot," into which, legend relates, the black witch had power to cast the white soldiers who pursued her. The barbarous blacks believed all this, for, though the troops were at one time on their trail for nine successive years, in the end the Maroons were more numerous than at the beginning, owing to accessions of runaway slaves. Old Cudjoe himself was declared to be in league with the devil, whom he was thought to resemble, and many a time he drew the white troops into ambush in that wild and rugged country only to slaughter them like sheep, until the

waters of the "Pot" were tinged with blood, and but few survivors escaped. Even when, at last, one of the British captains succeeded in dragging a pair of mountain howitzers up the cliffs commanding Nanny Town, and shelled their stronghold, though the Maroons were at first panic-stricken and some hurled themselves over the precipices, the main force merely scattered, like chickens before a hawk, and flanked the enemy by meeting in the rear and cutting the troop to pieces. Chief Cudjoe was at first astonished, but not demoralized. "Dis here da new fashion for fight," he said, as the shells came whizzing into the town, and, bursting, scattered death on every hand. "Da buckra man firs' he fire big ball arter you, and den de big ball heself fire nudder arter you ag'in. Caramba! Dis buckra more cunnin' dan tudder!" As stealthy and cunning as American Indians, these forest-born Maroons skulked through the woods on all sides of the noisy troops, but always out of sight until the right moment for delivering their fire with most fatal effect.

Finding that they could not subdue the Maroons by methods used in civilized warfare, the Jamaicans in 1737 resolved to import some Indians from the Mosquito Coast, and as these last were greater adepts at bushfighting even than the wild negroes, they soon ran them down and brought them to bay. In 1738, the scene of war having shifted to another portion of the island, a treaty of peace was concluded with the Maroons at Trelawney Town, under Captains Cudjoe, Accompong, Johnny, Cuffee, Quaco, "and several other negroes, their dependents and adher-



A country road near Kingston.

ents, who have been in a state of war and hostility, for several years past, against our sovereign lord the king, and the inhabitants of this island," whereby they were assured their liberty forever, granted a large tract of land in the mountains, and permitted unrestricted trade with the whites. On their part the Maroons agreed to maintain the peace, to return all runaway slaves that should seek an asylum with them, and to render aid in quelling local insurrections and repelling any foreign invader. In 1760 they were put to the test when a terrible outbreak occurred of the fierce Koromantyn blacks, who committed fearful atrocities. A party of Maroons came to the assistance of the whites, and made great show of zeal, ranging the woods for several days, and finally appearing with a large number of ears, which they averred they had cut from the heads of negroes they had killed, but which, it was later ascertained, they had procured from blacks already slaughtered and left on the field of battle by the white militia!

The existence of a body of free negroes in the midst of a slave population, even though less turbulent than the Maroons, could not but prove an excitant to frequent outbreaks and a source of great apprehension to the planters. But the wild blacks continued to enjoy their freedom unmolested until the year 1795, when two of them, having been detected in stealing pigs, were sent to the workhouse and given thirty-nine lashes on the bare back. When released, they immediately went to their reservation and roused the whole population by a recital

of the indignities that had been heaped upon them. They had been whipped, and by the black driver of the workhouse, in the presence of fugitive and felon negro slaves, some of whom they themselves had apprehended! This act was an offense to their pride which the whole body of blacks resented, and at once the mountains were on fire with revolt. Upon reviewing the measures that had been adopted in previous campaigns, it was found that great results had been obtained from the employment of dogs, packs of which had been furnished by the churchwardens of each parish of the island. As these had long since become exterminated, the local assembly voted an appropriation for the purchase of a pack of Cuban bloodhounds, and agents were sent to Cuba for that purpose. So, after an interval of about two centuries, the Spanish methods used against the Indians of the islands were about to be employed upon the successors to the aboriginal inhabitants. The commissioner who had been sent to Havana for the dogs arrived at Montego Bay with forty Spanish huntsmen, mostly mulattoes, and one hundred hounds. Preparations were immediately made to set these monsters on the trails; but no sooner was the news of their arrival carried to the Maroons than they hastened to sue for peace. "It is pleasing to observe," says the ancient historian, "that not a drop of blood was spilt after the dogs arrived in the island." A pacification was arranged within a week, or on the 21st of December, 1796, and in June of next year the chief offenders were banished to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where for a while they worked on the fortifi-

cations, and about the opening of this century were sent to Liberia.

Thus it came about that the Spanish negroes, who had maintained their independence for nearly one hundred and fifty years, were at last only subjugated by the employment of Spanish bloodhounds. Such Maroons as had refrained from participating in this outbreak were left undisturbed, and their descendants still dwell in the island, where they form a people apart from other blacks. Should my readers ever visit Jamaica, perhaps they will find it worth their while to call on the Maroons, the settlement most easily reached being that of Moore Town, near the John Crow Mountains, not far from famous Nanny Town, in the parish of Portland. Even should one feel disappointed in the aspect of the town and people, the journey thither will repay any reasonable outlay, taking one through mountain passes hung with luxuriant foliage, and by streams with roaring waters.

By the "articles of pacification," in 1738, the Maroons bound themselves to assist in recovering runaway slaves and in suppressing insurrections. One hundred and twenty-seven years after this treaty was signed, in 1865, they were called upon to observe these provisions. Slavery was abolished in 1834, and so there were no runaway slaves to recover; but there had been insurrections of the blacks at various times. In 1865 some discontented colored people rose in revolt against what they termed the injustice of the white minority, and it was even suggested that the white people should be killed or expelled, and



another black republic, like that of degenerate Haiti, established.

The whites have always been hopelessly in the minority in Jamaica, so long ago as 1692 being in the proportion of one to six, and at the end of the nineteenth century constituting only one fortieth of the total population. But for the saving grace of that one fortieth, however, Jamaica would not hold the rank she does to-day. Still, the revolt occurred, more than a score of whites were massacred, and property destroyed. It was suppressed with salutary rigor, and the ringleaders summarily shot. The rebels scattered and fled to the mountains, and when the Maroons were called upon to fulfill their treaty obligations and assist her Majesty's troops in suppressing the rebellion they responded with alacrity. After the task was accomplished, the Maroon warriors were invited to Kingston, the capital, and then the white people of Jamaica had their first glimpse of these redoubtable negroes. They were black and brawny, with the independent carriage of men who had ever maintained their independence. Some of them displayed silver medals which their ancestors had received in the time of the Georges, and these relics, as well as the stipulations under which they had come to the white man's assistance, carried the memory back to those days when the Maroons were a terror and a menace to Jamaica.

Since the emancipation, owing to the scarcity of labor and the consequent depression in the sugar-raising industry, more attention has been paid to the growing of bananas and other tropical fruits, with

the result that the black proprietors have greatly increased in number during the past ten years. They are taking up lands in the mountains, and, as the largest fruit plantation in the world, containing forty thousand acres, lies adjacent to the Moore Town region, the Maroons also are becoming interested, and are turning from the hunting of wild hogs to tilling land in the valleys devoted to banana culture.



Aboriginal mealing stones, Jamaica.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLES

PUERTO RICO, popularly though improperly called Porto Rico, was one of the first of the islands to be colonized by settlers from Hispaniola, though not until seventeen years after its discovery by Columbus. After the Indians of the Higüey, the eastern province of Hispaniola, had been subjugated, Governor Ovando sent thither as his lieutenant a soldier who had been prominent in the conquest, named Ponce de Leon. He was a veteran campaigner, having taken part in the wars with the Moors in Spain, and had come to the New World with Columbus on his second voyage. He was with him when he landed at Aguadilla to water his fleet, and could not but notice its beauty and fertility.

“The fleet remained here two days,” says Peter Martyr the historian, “without seeing an inhabitant. But there was a spacious walk from the shore, formed with trees, interwoven at the top like an arbor, which led to a village of twelve houses placed in a circle, one of them remarkable for its size; and at the end of the walk there was a balcony covered with beautiful plants.”

There is scant mention of Ponce de Leon in the chronicles of Hispaniola, but from the very fact that

he was selected by the infamous Ovando to govern the province which had been so cruelly harried by the Spaniards, we may infer that he was a man fitted for bloody deeds, even though he has come down to us as a model of knightly courtesy. Captain Ponce de Leon might have stayed there, probably, as long as he chose, but from the Indians who frequently came across the channel separating the two islands, and which is only ninety miles in breadth, he learned that the mountains of Puerto Rico, which could be seen in clear weather from the headlands of Higüey, abounded in gold.

That they were most beautiful, and their sides clothed with valuable woods, he also knew from his own observations in 1493; so he sought and obtained permission from Ovando to go across the channel and investigate. Although terrible atrocities had been perpetrated in Hispaniola since the first coming of the Spaniards, yet the Indians of the neighboring island seem to have had no knowledge of them, for they received Ponce and his soldiers with unsuspecting hospitality. Cacique Agueynaba, who resided at or near the present town of Aguadilla, admitted the Spaniard into the bosom of his family, and even exchanged names with him, in token of friendship. He also showed him his magnificent possessions, abounding in agricultural wealth, and took him to rivers that ran over sands of gold. This was sufficient for Ponce, and leaving some of his companions as guests of the cacique, he returned to Higüey and organized his expedition, which landed in Puerto Rico some time in the year 1509.

The Indians at first were peaceable, and in fact Ponce de Leon had more trouble with his own countrymen than with the natives; for while he was effecting the conquest Don Diego Columbus came out to supersede Ovando, and appointed two of his friends to the government of the island, one of them being the redoubtable Miguel Diaz, the same who had married



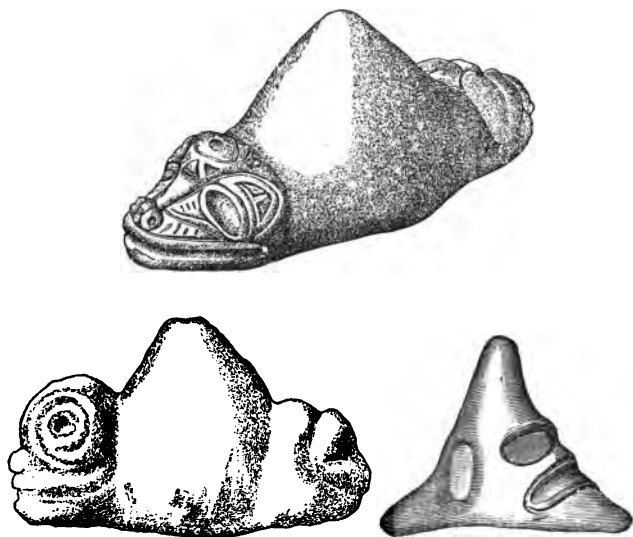
Casa Blanca, Ponce de Leon's castle.

the Indian caciquess, and had led the Spaniards to the mines of gold. King Ferdinand also named one Cristoval de Sotomayor as governor; but finally Ponce de Leon prevailed and in the end was confirmed as adelantado. Founding the first city on the north coast and calling it Caparra, Ponce proceeded to extract all the profit he could from his new possession, and be-

came so oppressive that the Indians revolted. They were of the same racial family as the natives of Hispaniola, but as their island had been subject for many years to the invasions of the Caribs they had become somewhat schooled in warfare, and loved a fight almost as much as the doughty old Spaniard himself.

Ponce had patched up a peace with his rival, Sotomayor, and assigned him a repartimiento of Indians, among them being the brother and successor to Agueynaba, who had so well received the Spaniards on their first visit. Sotomayor had fallen in love with the cacique's sister, it seems, and the first intimation of trouble was from her; but the gallant hidalgo would not heed the warning, and so was ambushed and killed while on his way to Caparra. The Indians were slow at organizing a rebellion, because they had conceived the idea that the Spaniards were immortal; but one of the caciques, named Brayogan, shrewdly determined to test this alleged immortality of the newcomers, and abide by the result. He ordered two of his subjects who were carrying a Spaniard named Salzedo through the forest to fall upon him at the first river they should cross, and keep him under water a while. This they did until the poor fellow was drowned, when they took his body to the bank of the river and watched by it until there was no longer any doubt of his death. At once the slumbering flame of revolt spread over the island, and soon five thousand warriors were marching upon Caparra. The force under Ponce's command numbered less than a hundred, but all the men were armed with arquebuses and in-

cased in steel armor, so that the contest was not long unequal. But it was not until Agueynaba himself had received a mortal wound that the rebellion was broken and the Indians fled to the mountains. Their fate was that of their race in other islands, and not many years passed before they sank beneath the tasks imposed upon them by the Spaniards. Before that century was gone, in fact, they had ceased



"Mammiform" stones, Puerto Rico (aboriginal carvings).

to exist, and we know of them now only through tradition and by the relics they left behind. These relics, unique and rare, eagerly sought by collectors, and desirable objects for the museums, show that these Indians had advanced farther on the road to

civilization than either the Caribs of the Lesser Antilles, or their Arawak neighbors of Haiti.

By this time Ponce de Leon was well advanced in years, and would rather have spent the remainder of his life in repose than in fighting Indians; but such was not to be his lot. There came to his ears an Indian tale to the effect that there existed, in an island of the Bahamas, a wonderful fountain, the waters of which were not only healing, but capable of restoring youth to the aged. The old warrior was credulous; he had wealth, and he had vessels at his command; so he set forth from his island in search of Bimini, the Fountain of Youth. He sailed through the Bahama chain, visiting, among other islands, the veritable Guanahani where Columbus had landed in 1492, and questioning the natives about the object of his search. They too had heard of Bimini, but could not inform him exactly where it was, so he kept on northward for many days until he sighted the coast of a country the fields and trees of which were gay with fragrant blossoms. I need hardly say that this land was none other than our own Florida, which he so named on account of having discovered it on Palm Sunday, or *Pascua Florida*. He first sighted it in about the latitude of Saint Augustine, and coasted southward until he reached a group of islets which he called the Tortugas, because he and his men captured one hundred and seventy sea turtles (Spanish, *tortugas*), besides fourteen sea wolves and a great number of pelicans. Returning to the Bahamas, he touched at an island which he named La Vieja, or the Old Woman, on



account of finding there as its sole inhabitant an aged crone, who told him that she could guide him to



Sea wall and governor's palace, San Juan.

Bimini, and was taken on board his vessel. With this old dame as pilot the Spaniards were more for-

tunate, for they found the famed Bimini, an island of verdant fields and crystal springs; but the waters of the latter, alas! possessed not the power of rejuvenescence. Disappointed in his main quest, Ponce de Leon yet rated his discoveries so highly as to report them in person at King Ferdinand's court, and by his sovereign he was made adelantado of Bimini and Florida.

If he had been younger, he might have made more of his desultory achievements; but his years wore upon him, as shown in the futile attempt he made, in 1514, to subdue the Caribs. He left Puerto Rico with three ships and a fine armament, a great display of confidence and flourish of trumpets; but at the very first island at which he touched for wood and water the party he had sent ashore was ambushed by the Caribs, several men killed and wounded, and others carried off as prisoners to the mountains. This untoward event took place at the island of Guadeloupe, where Columbus first encountered these fierce Indians. Disgusted and disheartened, Ponce de Leon set sail for home again, and for several years after that sulked in his castle on the coast. But in 1521, stirred to action by the stories coming to his ears from Cuba and Mexico, he fitted out a last expedition for the exploration and conquest of Florida. His usual fortune attended him, for in the very first encounter with the Indians he was wounded in the thigh by an arrow. His men carried him on board ship and set sail for Cuba, where he died soon after arrival. The object of the expedition was abandoned and the remains of the gal-

lant old soldier were taken back to Puerto Rico, where at last they rest, in a leaden case similar to that which contains the ashes of Columbus in Santo Domingo.

Now that Puerto Rico is an American possession, any one may freely inspect the relics of Ponce de Leon in that island, chief of which is the castle he built, the "Casa Blanca," just before sailing on his last voyage, and which is one of the finest structures in the city of San Juan, with an inclosed garden attached, having an outlook over the sea.

The city of San Juan, capital of Puerto Rico, was founded about 1520, Governor Ponce having removed thither from Caparra. It contains, besides the castle erected by him, the finest fortifications to be found in America; or, rather, the massive walls contain within their line of circumvallation the city itself — the only example we possess of the kind. Its great castle, Morro, was begun not long after Ponce de Leon's day, but was not completed until 1584, and the entire system was only perfected by 1771.

The history of Puerto Rico, since the extinction of the Indians, has been mainly uneventful, except for the occasional attacks of pirates and the visits of hurricanes. In 1529 the town of San German was sacked by French pirates, and the coast region was ravaged by the Caribs. Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins attacked San Juan on their last voyage to the West Indies, in 1595. The Dutch attacked the capital in 1615, the English in 1678, and the latter frequently made futile attempts to land here,

their last being under Abercrombie in 1797. But the massive walls of San Juan have withstood every effort made to breach them during more than three centuries, even resisting the terrible fire of modern cannon, when Admiral Sampson bombarded the fortress in the summer of 1898.

Much might be said of Puerto Rico; but, as of Cuba, a great deal has been already written, espe-



Aboriginal "mask" and "collar," Puerto Rico (carved stone).

cially since the Spanish-American War. It holds the proud distinction of being the first island in the West Indies to come under our flag, and, as the first of our possessions in the American tropics, it will probably be the theater of events having more than local significance. When, in the summer of 1898, Puerto Rico became a possession of the United States, the flag of Spain had floated over it three hundred and

ninety years, never once having been lowered by a foreign foe.\*

Having acquainted ourselves with the most important historical events that have taken place in the Bahamas and the Greater Antilles—Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico—let us now voyage a little farther, and visit the islands lying between them and the north coast of South America.

East of Puerto Rico we find an irregular group of isles and islets known as the Virgins, comprising Sombrero, Anegada, Virgin Gorda, Saint John, Saint Thomas, and Santa Cruz. All are interesting—no portion of the world more so. Anegada, for instance, with its ponds fed from the sea by subterranean channels, and the resort of gorgeous flamingoes during the rainy season; Virgin Gorda, with its gold- and copper-veined mountains containing caves once the resorts of pirates and smugglers; Tortola, which derived its name from the gentle doves that inhabit its cliffs; Saint John, the ancient abode of long-extinct Indians; and finally Saint Thomas, for more than two hundred years a possession of the Danes. All are English except the two last named, and in their midst lies the great bay called after Sir Francis Drake, who assembled his fleet here when on his

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\* The island is described in detail in the author's *Puerto Rico and its Resources*; while Cuba and the Spanish-American War are treated at length in his *History of Spain for Young Readers*; both published in 1899.

way to attack Hispaniola. Most of them have fine and sheltered harbors, but especially Saint Thomas and Saint John, on which account they have several times been near becoming an appanage of some greater power than little Denmark. The Government of the United States, in fact, once negotiated



Harbor of Charlotte Amalie, Saint Thomas.

their purchase (in 1867) at seven million five hundred thousand dollars, but the project fell through. There is a possibility that it may be revived; but since the acquisition of Puerto Rico by the United States the necessity for acquiring these islands as coaling stations for American war vessels no longer

exists. Saint Thomas, though once the resort of buccaneers and all sorts of sea gentry, and so rich that Spanish dollars were wheeled through its streets by the barrow load, has in modern times become sad and solitary. Its one bright jewel is its harbor, deep and capacious, and here lies its one town of Charlotte Amalie, built on and at the bases of three beautiful hills, each hill crowned by a picturesque tower.

Now, as we have not the space for an extended description of the island's many attractive features, I am going to devote a few lines to a harrowing tale connected with one of those towers. It relates to pirates and piracy, the island and its adjacent seas; but I can not vouch for it as authentic. About the middle of the seventeenth century one Blackbeard, formerly known as Captain Teach, of Bristol, England, took to the high seas for a living, and became the scourge of the Spanish, Dutch, and English merchant marine. He had discovered in the island of Saint Thomas, then recently taken possession of by the Danes, a retreat after a pirate's own heart, for it abounded in hidden harbors, reef-inclosed inlets and bays, and high promontories that commanded wide-extended views of the surrounding seas. Between Blackbeard's retreat and the place where the Danes had settled rose a hill about fifteen hundred feet in height, which concealed the pirates' operations, and so they landed at their leisure, carrying their guns and stores ashore. The compatriots of the immortal Hamlet had built a little red fort (which is still there), mounted it with cast-iron cannon (in position

to-day), and garrisoned it with a handful of stolid, wooden-headed soldiers.

Hauling some cannon up to the hill crest, which commanded not only the town of Charlotte Amalie and its harbor, but all the outlying reefs and islets, Blackbeard saw that he had the Danes at his mercy, and is said to have chuckled gleefully. Right below him, standing isolate on the central hill, was the old tower I have mentioned, which, tradition states, was built before the first Europeans arrived there. That was the object of Blackbeard's ambition, and if we had been on the hill above the port, on the night succeeding the occupation of the crest, we might have seen a band of villainous cutthroats carefully wending their way down the steeps in that direction. And the next morning, when the peaceful Danes gazed northward and saw the pirate flag, with its black field, skull and crossbones, flying from the parapet of the tower, we may well believe they were astonished. They hastened to point their antiquated cast-iron cannon at it, as a matter of course; but they never fired them off, for the pirate captain threatened to blow their fort "into smithereens" at the first sign of offensive operations. So the base intruders were allowed, it is said, to stay there, right in the center of his Danish Majesty's island, and dictate terms to his high mightiness the governor. After this little matter was amicably arranged, Blackbeard brought down from the hill crest his stores of ammunition and plunder; not forgetting, you may be sure, his nineteen beautiful wives, whose faces were veiled from the rude gaze of curious spec-



tators. And there they were cruelly incarcerated, these nineteen captive brides of the pirate, and only from the narrow slits in the tower could they look out upon one of the fairest prospects in the Caribbean Sea.

Now it is not pretended, even by the great Blackbeard's eulogist, that these captive women loved their master; indeed, they probably hated him. But what could they do with a man who, when time hung heavy on his hands, said to his crew: "Come down into the hold, my merry men. I've got about a ton of brimstone there; we'll light it, and have a little inferno of our own"? And as such a request was itself in the nature of a command, emphasized by a display of the pistols, cutlasses, and daggers which Blackbeard wore belted about his person, his crew always accepted the invitation with pretended alacrity. After getting them into the hold of his vessel, with the hatches battened down, the genial pirate would light sundry pots of brimstone, previously prepared, and serenely await developments. As his own constitution was habituated to diabolical pastimes, Mr. Blackbeard seemed to inhale those fumes sulphureous as if they were "gales from Araby," and if one of his unfortunate messmates even ventured to cough he was promptly knocked on the head. And when at last, sneezing, coughing, sputtering, the tortured men essayed a bolt for outer air, their jolly captain simply crossed his hands, in each hand a pistol, and fired indiscriminately into the crowd of wretches, wounding and killing without compunction. That was Blackbeard's idea of "a good time"; at

all events, it was simply one of his lighter pastimes, his really serious business being shown in making the hapless sailors who fell into his hands "walk the plank."

How long Blackbeard held the tower tradition does not state; but the time came when his dreadful deeds brought upon him the combined fleets of the nations which he had so long and violently outraged.



Date palms, Charlotte Amalie.

A sea dog born and bred, he could not long stay ashore, even though securely intrenched in the island of the Danes; so at last, leaving a portion of his harem in the tower, he descended to the harp-shaped harbor behind the mountain, and again ventured forth upon the sea. He had better have stayed ashore and dared fate in his tower, for it is matter of history that he met his match in the person of a

valiant lieutenant in the English navy, who, after a bloody fight, overcame him and his crew, and sailed into a harbor on the coast of Virginia with the head of Blackbeard at the end of his bowsprit. It was the fiercest, most savage-looking head that has ever been seen since the Medusa shook her snaky locks and transformed living men to stone; for the face was covered to the eyes with bushy whiskers, black as night, and this enormous beard was adorned with wax tapers and lighted matches, when its owner was in life and in action, giving him an appearance nothing less than diabolic. The shaggy head was taken in triumph to shore, never more to wag in hideous jest, nor to determine the fate of wretches by a nod. "Blackbeard's Tower" still stands on a hill above the quaint town of Charlotte Amalie; the little red fort is there, with its gaping old guns still pointing skyward, and the Danes are there, stiff and formal as of yore.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### IN THE VOLCANIC CHAIN

SOUTHEAST of the Virgin Isles lie the Lesser Antilles, extending in a curved line from  $17^{\circ}$  north latitude to within ten degrees of the equator. In these islands we find the perfection of insular beauty; mountains of great altitude; cliffs shooting up abruptly from the sea, overhung with richest tapestry of tropical vegetation; silver sands shaded by bending palms—in very truth the realization of an artist's dream. Owing to their altitude they present not only every variety of climate, from temperate to tropical, but every beautiful aspect of vegetation, from the bananas and sugar canes of the coast to the feathery tree ferns of the cool and pleasant "high wood," with their giant trees hung with a tangle of lianes and bush ropes. Each island, in fact, is a partly submerged volcano, its sides, and even the extinct crater, clothed with luxuriant growths. Although there are several outlying islands, such as Anegada, Saint Martin, and Saint Bartholomew, the real chain of volcanic isles begins with a pair of peaks belonging to the Dutch, named Saba and Saint Eustatius.

Having camped in every one of them they seem to me like old and loving friends, and it would be dif-

ficult for me to name the island with the greatest charms. Each isle has its attractions, some natural, some historical, but there is not one we can omit from notice. Beginning with Saba, we find it an isolated mountain peak sticking up out of the sea, with hardly an accessible point; yet in its extinct crater, nearly nine hundred feet above the sea, lives a little community of Dutch origin, the men of which, though actually sky dwellers, are the best sailors anywhere to be found. In seeking out this mountain hamlet, which, by the way is called "Bottom," from being situated in the bottom of the crater, I had to land upon a surf-battered shore at the imminent risk of my life, and climb nearly a thousand feet, up a steep, almost perpendicular cliff, by means of a narrow, tortuous path.

I do not know that Saba has any history worthy of chronicling; but its sister isle of 'Statia has something in its keeping well worthy our investigation, and likely to stir our pulses when discovered. Holding this secret in abeyance a bit, let me say that, like Saba, it consists mainly of a mountain shooting straight up out of the sea, but with longer slopes, deeper hollows, and more accessible shore. Eustatius is celebrated for its beautiful volcano, symmetrical and magnificent, and for its deep crater hole. The summit may be reached by a few hours' climbing, when one may not only stand on the very lip of the crater, but descend to the lowest part of the concavity. It is about a thousand feet deep, and so long has the old volcano been quiet that the sides and bottom are lined with great trees, where the wood pigeons coo all

day, and beneath which the agoutis and other tropical animals hide from the light of the sun. At night the bats and owls flit across the black space, the tall trees sway and moan, and hollow sounds come out of the crater. I know this to be so, because I once passed a night camped on the crater brim, in order to study the nocturnal phenomena.

To the inhabitants of the island the mountain is known as the Quill, and the crater as the Punch Bowl—the latter probably derived from the fact that many merry parties in times past have visited and lunched here. The island is owned by the Dutch, but English is spoken here as well as in Saba. In the latter island may still be found descendants of Dutch sailors who sailed with Admiral Van Tromp, who cruised with a broom at his masthead in token that he had swept the seas. In Saint Eustatius are many relics of the olden time, when the riches of the East Indies and Europe were made tributary to the West. Once there were fine plantations here, and the surface of the plains was covered with waving sugar cane; but now there is neither estate, nor cane, nor toiling slave: all have passed into the limbo of departed glory and greatness.

Now for the historical tradition 'Statia so proudly cherishes. You would not expect to find the history of our early colonies linked with that of this diminutive islet, obscure and forgotten, on the outer verge of the Caribbees; yet so it is. It is a bit of neglected history, but it is authentic: that the flag of our colonies—subsequently, in altered guise, the emblem of our nation—was first recog-



A coast plantation, Santa Cruz.

nized by a foreign power in the harbor of Orange, Saint Eustatius!

As Orange was a neutral port, and from the outbreak of the Revolution seemed disposed in favor of the revolting colonies, many American privateers betook themselves thither for supplies, and among them a brigantine, the *Andrew Doria*, from Baltimore, carrying fourteen four-pounders and manned with a crew of one hundred men. She sailed into the roadstead of Orange on the 16th of November, 1776, flying the newly adopted American flag. Where her captain or owners obtained this flag has not been ascertained; but that it was carried by the saucy privateer, and that the fort of Orange responded to the vessel's salute with thirteen shots, in honor of the thirteen rebellious colonies—all this transpired in the correspondence carried on between the governor and commander of the island and that of the neighboring island of Saint Kitt's.

This governor of 'Statia was one Johannes de Graef, a doughty Hollander of good family, who, responding under date of December 23, 1776, to the English governor's remonstrance against "this insult to his Britannic Majesty," denied that any piratical vessel had received aid or comfort at his port. But he added, "As to the salute to the *Andrew Doria*, I flatter myself that, if my masters exact it, I shall be able to give such an account as shall be satisfactory."

An honest rejoinder, though a diplomatic one. But the matter did not end here, for, the correspondence being referred to higher authority in 1777, the



British ambassador at The Hague presented a memorial to the High and Mighty States-General, demanding a formal disavowal of the salute to the brigantine in the port of 'Statia, and the discharge and recall of the governor, Johannes de Graef.

Their High Mightinesses answered by a counter memorial, disavowing any intention of an implied recognition of American belligerency or independence, and the case was allowed to rest. But, while allowed to lapse for a while, it was eventually made a *casus belli* between the two countries and caused a rupture of their peaceful relations. England issued a manifesto in December, 1780, setting forth that the Dutch colonies, and particularly Saint Eustatius, had afforded protection and assistance to her rebellious subjects; had allowed their privateers to refit, to purchase arms and ammunition, and had bought their prizes taken at sea, in "violation of as clear and solemn a stipulation as can be made."

The upshot was that secret instructions were sent to Admiral Lord Rodney, then at New York, who immediately sailed for the West Indies, and suddenly appeared off 'Statia in February, 1781. Governor De Graef was unaware of any rupture between his Government and England, nor was there any at that time, and perforce complied with Rodney's summons to surrender. The island was then at the height of a prosperity never regained, its warehouses filled to bursting with stores, and the entire beach in front of Port Orange covered with tobacco and sugar. The value of the plunder taken by Rodney was estimated by him at more than fifteen

million dollars, exclusive of the shipping then in port, amounting to two hundred and fifty sail, many of the vessels richly laden; a thirty-two-gun frigate, and some smaller sloops of war. The reprehensible conduct of Lord Rodney, and General Vaughan in command of the land forces, in attacking an almost defenseless island before its Government was made aware of the breaking out of hostilities, was made a subject of official inquiry in the British Parliament. Mr. Burke moved that their actions were dishonest; but his motion was finally rejected by a vote of one hundred and sixty-three to eighty-nine. So it seems there were many Englishmen who believed the colonial Hollanders were unfairly dealt with and had justice on their side. But it mattered not; they never recovered their lost property, nor even their lost prestige; their port is to-day gone to ruin, only a few people occupying the remains of the town.

Within sight, to the southward, lies the English island of Saint Christopher, commonly called Saint Kitt's, the jealousy of whose governor brought about 'Statia's ruin. It is the mother colony of the French and English islands, having been settled in 1623 by adventurers of both nationalities. These settlers were dispersed by the Spaniards in 1630, but the following year many of them returned, and, as they had driven the native Caribs from the island after a great battle, for many years the French and English lived together in peace, dividing the territory between them. Toward the latter part of the century they participated in the contentions of their respective nations, and strife broke out, hundreds



In the crater of Mount Misery.

being slain. By the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713, the island was ceded to the British crown, and afterward attained a great prosperity; but in 1782 the English, attacked by an overpowering force of French, under the Marquis de Bouillé and the Count de Grasse, were compelled to surrender. The victory was rendered fruitless, however, by the Treaty of Versailles (1783), when the island was restored to Great Britain, in whose possession it has ever since remained.

A very beautiful island, it is also one of the most fertile in the West Indies, its soil being considered the finest to be found anywhere for sugar cane. A rich and populous belt entirely surrounds a wild and shaggy mountain district, within which is the celebrated Mount Misery, rising to a height of four thousand feet, clothed in glorious vegetation and with a crater well worth a climb to see. A reminder of the historic past here is Brimstone Hill, a detached peak seven hundred and fifty feet in height, near the western shore of the island, crowned by a fortification so strong that it was once styled the "Gibraltar of America." But to-day it is well-nigh dismantled, and the millions that were spent on it were worse than thrown away. It has never served any good use at all, for no enemy in recent times has ever come within reach of its obsolete old guns, as nobody has wanted the island since the English took it from the French, more than a hundred years ago.

Now, though the fort on Brimstone Hill is deserted, yet should you approach it stealthily, without making a noise—if that were possible—you

might see humanlike animals disporting upon its battlements and peering through the loopholes. They are not men, but monkeys, that now garrison this deserted "Gibraltar" of Saint Kitt's; or in other words, the "Kittefonians" of the forest. It is a curious fact that there is no record extant of any monkeys having been found by the first settlers in the West Indies; and another fact is that the only species now seen there are confined to the islands of Saint Kitt's and Grenada, both pertaining to the Lesser Antilles, or the Caribbees. And they are not indigenous, or true American monkeys, either; for they came over from Africa many, many years ago, and are descended from African ancestors which escaped to the forest and ran wild. Their existence here was long a puzzle to naturalists until I secured the skins of some, in 1880, and sent them to the United States, when it was seen that they belonged to the Old World, their chief distinguishing characteristic being a long, stiff tail, while the caudal appendage of American monkeys is prehensile.

If it were within the scope of our inquiry into the origin of the West Indians to include these "little brothers" of the forest wilds, I might narrate my adventures while seeking them in their homes. At any rate, it may not seem irrelevant to mention that they now constitute a considerable majority of the Kittefonians; that they range the woods in troops, and descend from their forest fastnesses upon the cane fields and commit great depredations.

Between Saint Kitt's and the adjacent island of Nevis is said to be a submarine passage through which

the monkeys pass from one to the other; at all events, the same species is found in the woods of the latter. Nevis is historically interesting as the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton, 1757; and as the island in which Lord Nelson was married in 1787, while captain of his Majesty's ship *Boreas*.

## CHAPTER XIX

### HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS

DURING more than two hundred years the French and English battled for the possession of the Lesser Antilles. For nearly a century after the genius of Columbus had added these tropical islands to the holdings of the Spanish crown, Spain denied all rights of navigation in the Caribbean Sea to other powers. She held it to be hers by right of discovery, and she purposed to hold it by might of ships and men; but about thirty years after San Salvador was discovered she found the French corsairs there already becoming annoying. They stealthily entered this body of water which she regarded as a *mare clausum*, or inclosed sea, and preyed upon her fat old galleons sailing up from the Isthmus with their rich freights of silver and gold. As early as 1529, or only thirty-seven years after the discovery, a French fleet had penetrated the sacred confines, and the Spaniards were thrown into consternation by the arrival of an English vessel at Santo Domingo. In 1538 a bloody sea fight took place between a French corsair and a Spanish war ship; and three years later the French and English, combined, inflicted heavy losses upon the galleons, though the West Indies

had then begun to decline, and the Peruvian and Mexican mines were failing somewhat.

The efforts of other nations to deprive Spain of her conquests were only desultory, however, until near the end of the sixteenth century; and it was not until 1572 that Sir Francis Drake, that pirate of high degree, came here with a well-defined intention of inflicting all the harm he could to Spanish cities, towns, and treasure ships. At last, in despair of keeping others out, Spain seems to have relinquished her rights to nearly all the islands southward from Puerto Rico, while the French and English, ignoring her completely, fought between themselves as to who should secure these rich fields for colonization.

The history of Martinique, for example, will suffice for that of nearly all. Though discovered by Columbus in 1502, it remained virgin territory until colonized by the French in 1635; but it was four times seized by the British—in 1762, 1781, 1794, and 1809—and finally restored to the French in 1814, by whom it has ever since been held. Of the score and more of isles and islets which France won by the sword and settled with her colonists, less than half a dozen remain to her now within the confines of the Caribbean Sea. Thousands of lives and millions of treasure have been wasted in acquiring and defending these islands of the Lesser Antilles, yet to-day not one is a profitable possession to the nation owning it.

Of the two large islands owned by France in the West Indies, that of Guadeloupe is of greater area



than Martinique, the former lying between the parallels of  $16^{\circ}$  and  $17^{\circ}$  north latitude, the latter two degrees farther south, with the English island of Dominica midway the two. Guadeloupe really comprises two islands: an immense mountain mass, with beautiful valleys and forest-covered hills, an extinct volcano, hot springs, and coffee plantations; separated by a narrow creek from a vast tract of lowland, covered with sugar estates, level of surface and rich of soil.

Martinique is about forty miles in length by twenty in breadth—like all the others, a congeries of mountains thrust up from the ocean depths, and covered from mountain top to water side with tropical vegetation. Guadeloupe has two important cities, Basse Terre and Point à Pitre; Martinique also two, Saint Pierre and Fort de France, the former the commercial metropolis, the latter the seat of government. Unlike its sister city, which lies on an open roadstead, Fort de France (formerly known as Fort Royal) is sheltered in a deep bay, near the entrance to which stands the fortress of Saint Louis, built two centuries ago. It was once a fine city, and occupied by people whose manners and costumes were patterned after those of La Belle France; but fire and hurricane have done destructive work, and the flood of blacks from the interior has obliterated nearly all evidences of refinement. Still, its site is handsome, and in the center of its *savane*, or park, is a statue of the only daughter of America who rose to joint occupancy of the throne of France—Josephine, the first wife of Napoleon Bonaparte. About this statue, of



Old sugar mill, La Pagerie estate.

pure white marble, more than in the island itself, perhaps, the stranger's interest centers. An inscription tells us that the birthplace of this illustrious woman lies just across the bay, at Trois Îlet, only four miles distant.

It was as a naturalist, seeking rare birds, that I made my first visit to Martinique in 1878, and I lived a while at the plantation of La Pagerie, Josephine's birthplace, gathering there many a tradition relating to her early years, and from the records of Trois Îlet extracting information which, even at this late date, may not be amiss in this connection.

When the English attacked Martinique in 1762, there existed here a society which could boast connection with the highest and noblest of France. Among other indigent noblemen who had left the land of their birth for ventures in the colonies was one Tascher, who came out here in the year 1726. He prospered from the beginning, and when his first son was born he had large estates of sugar cane, which were bestowed upon him at his marriage. Settling upon the estate of La Pagerie, across the great bay from Fort Royal and the fortress, Joseph Tascher de la Pagerie devoted himself to the raising of cane and coffee.

In 1757 there arrived in the island, as lieutenant governor of all the French Antilles, the Marquis de Beauharnais. The name was then well known in France, as there were five of that family, officers in service, on the naval registers. On June 10, 1760, there was baptized, in the church of Saint Louis at Fort Royal, the governor's son, Alexandre

de Beauharnais, to whom Madame de Renaudine, Joseph Tascher's sister, stood godmother.

Joseph was married in November, 1761, to the daughter of an ancient family resident here. Within a few months he was compelled to hasten to the defense of the island against the English, in which he acquitted himself bravely, and won the regard of the British commander, who permitted him to retire to his estate. From the hills above her house Madame Tascher witnessed the storming and capture of Fort Saint Louis and the surrender of the French force, in which her husband served; so it was amid scenes of great perturbation that the married life of this young couple began. The house in which Josephine was born, on the 23d of June, 1763, was standing at the time of my first visit, though in ruins. Here, amid friends and slaves, this lovely creole, who subsequently became one of the most famous of women, passed the happiest years of her life, but not without some sad experiences. When she was four years of age her father's residence was destroyed by a hurricane, and the family took shelter in the building used as a sugar mill, which was her home for ten years more. The Taschers were wealthy, as the islanders computed wealth, having one hundred and fifty slaves and vast acreage on the hill slopes of Trois Îlet; but the father never rebuilt the dwelling house, his spirit seemingly being crushed by repeated reverses.

It was a disappointment to Monsieur and Madame Tascher that no son was born to them, but they named their second daughter Josephine, in honor of the first

of the father's family who had come to this hemisphere. At the age of ten she was sent to school at Fort Royal, passing her time there and on the plantation until she arrived at the age of sixteen. Her union with young Beauharnais seems to have been brought about by her aunt, Madame de Renaudine, Alexandre's godmother. They were betrothed before he left for France, whither Josephine followed, and where they were married in December, 1779.

In June, 1788, Josephine came back to Martinique with her daughter Hortense, having separated from her husband, and two years later she returned to France, never again looking upon the scenes of her childhood. There, after experiencing the horrors of the Reign of Terror, after Beauharnais was executed, and she herself was imprisoned, narrowly escaping the guillotine, she met and was wedded to Bonaparte, who like herself was island born, and not native to the soil of France.

A few miles from the plantation is the little bourg of Trois Îlet, where stands the church in which the future Empress of France was baptized, and where her father and mother are buried. This, in brief, is the history of Josephine's connection with Martinique; and after this digression (the only excuse for which is to afford comparison between the obscurity of her birth and the elevated station to which she attained) we will follow the general trend of events toward the close of the eighteenth century.

The English wrested nearly all the Lesser Antilles from the French; but when in 1768 the Marquis de

Bouillé was appointed governor of Guadeloupe and commander in chief of all the French forces in the Caribbees, affairs took on a different aspect. After the breaking out of the war of 1778, in conjunction with different naval commanders, he took nearly all the islands back again, his vigorous campaign culminating in the capture of Saint Kitt's, the fall of Brimstone Hill, and defeat of an English fleet under



The church at Trois îlet.

Admiral Hood. This commander was that same gallant Bouillé who assisted Louis XVI in his futile attempt to escape from France and the guillotine, and who was later compelled to flee for his life from the country for which he had so long and so vainly fought.

Lying just south of Martinique, and separated from it by a sea channel thirty miles in width, is the island of Saint Lucia, where thousands of brave men,

led by misguided commanders, have left their bones and drenched with their lifeblood the soil of every hillside on its northern shores. Like the other isles of the Caribbees, it was a "bone of contention" between England and France for nearly two centuries; but the most sanguinary contest took place here in the year 1778. The British troops were commanded by brave General Meadows, the French by gallant and dashing D'Estaing. Intrenched upon the "vigie" of Castries (which the English of to-day are fortifying against the world), the British awaited attack. While a murderous fire was kept up from their ships, the French, led by D'Estaing and the Marquis de Bouillé, briskly advanced to the charge. They were at first enfiladed with terrible effect, but, notwithstanding the havoc, they charged with impetuosity, the British suffering them to advance close to their intrenchments, and then receiving them at the bayonet's point. Though the French were repulsed, they advanced again and again with incredible bravery, but at the third charge were completely broken and retired in disorder, leaving on the field four hundred killed and eleven hundred wounded—a number in excess of the force they had attacked! The chivalrous D'Estaing asked and received permission to bury his dead and recover his wounded, making himself accountable for them as prisoners of war, and then left the island. Sailing southward he took the islands of Grenada and Tobago, where the British were not so strongly fortified, and thence went to the assistance of the American colonists.

This is but one of the episodes of that war between France and England which brought about the defeat and humiliation of the former and the ultimate supremacy of the latter, and by which the history of our thirteen colonies was inextricably interwoven with that of these far-distant Caribbee Isles.

These two great nations sent thither their largest fleets and greatest captains—Howe and D’Estaing, Rodney and De Grasse—and not mere local fortunes, but world destinies, hung upon the issue of events in this obscure quarter of the globe. Rodney had been held accountable for the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, having failed to go to his aid on account of the plunder of ’Statia; but he soon made amends by the detention and subsequent destruction of the French fleet under De Grasse. Since the great naval battle that ensued between these commanders has such a bearing upon international history, I shall borrow the description by a historian of established reputation, James Anthony Froude, who a few years before his death visited the Caribbees, and who says:

“The West Indies were then under the charge of Rodney, whose brilliant successes had already made his name famous. He had torn the Lesser Antilles from the French; he had punished the Hollanders for joining the coalition by taking Saint Eustatius. The patriot party at home [in England], led by Fox and Burke, were ill pleased with these victories; Burke denounced Rodney as he had denounced Warren Hastings, and he was called home to answer for himself. In his absence Demerara, the Leeward Islands, and Saint Eustatius itself were captured or recovered by



the enemy. The French fleet, now supreme in the western waters, blockaded Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown and forced him to capitulate. The Spaniards had fitted out a fleet at Havana, and Count de Grasse, the French admiral, fresh from the victorious thunder of the American cannon, hastened back to refurnish himself at Martinique, intending to join the Spaniards, tear Jamaica from us [the English], and drive us finally and completely out of the West Indies. One chance remained. Rodney was ordered back to his station, and he went at his best speed, taking all the ships with him which could then be spared. It was midwinter, but he forced his way to Barbadoes in five weeks, spite of equinoctial storms. The Whig orators were indignant. . . . The Government yielded, and a peremptory order followed on Rodney's track: 'Strike your flag and come home!' Had that fatal command reached him, Gibraltar would have fallen and Hastings's Indian empire would have melted into air! But Rodney knew that his time was short and he had been prompt to use it. Before the order came the severest battle in English annals had been fought and won; De Grasse was a prisoner, and the French fleet was scattered into wreck and ruin!

"De Grasse had refitted in the Martinique dockyards. He himself and every officer in his fleet was confident that England was at last done for, and that nothing was left but to gather the fruits of the victory which was theirs already. . . . All the Lesser Antilles except Saint Lucia were his own. . . . He held them all in proud possession: a string of gems,

each island large as or larger than the Isle of Man, rising up with high volcanic peaks, clothed from base to crest with forest, carved into deep ravines, and fringed with luxuriant plains. In Saint Lucia alone the English flag still flew, and Rodney lay there in the harbor of Castries. On April 8, 1782, the signal came from the north end of the island that the French fleet had sailed. Martinique is in sight of Saint Lucia, and the rock is still shown from which Rodney had watched day by day for signs that they were moving. They were out at last, and he instantly weighed and followed. The air was light, and De Grasse was under the highlands of Dominica before Rodney came up with him. Both fleets were becalmed, and the English were scattered and divided by a current which runs between the islands. The two following days the fleets maneuvered in sight of each other. On the night of the 11th Rodney made signal for the whole fleet to go south under press of sail. The French thought he was flying. He tacked at two in the morning, and at daybreak found himself where he wished to be—with the French fleet on his lee quarter. . . . In number of ships the fleets were equal; in size and complement of crew the French were immensely superior; and besides the ordinary ships' companies they had twenty thousand soldiers on board, who were to be used in the conquest of Jamaica. . . . The English admiral was aware that his country's fate was in his hands. It was one of those supreme moments which great men dare to use and small men tremble at. He had the advantage of the wind and could

force a battle or decline it, as he pleased. With clear daylight the signal to engage was flying from the masthead of the *Formidable*, Rodney's ship. At seven in the morning, April 12th, the whole fleet bore down obliquely on the French line, cutting it directly in two. Rodney led in person. Having passed through and broken up their order he tacked again, still keeping the wind. The French, thrown into confusion, were unable to re-form, and the battle resolved itself into a number of separate engagements, in which the English had the choice of position.

"Rodney in passing through the enemy's lines the first time had exchanged broadsides with the *Glorieux*, a seventy-four, at close range. He had shot away her masts and bowsprit, and had left her a bare hull; her flag, however, still flying, being nailed to a splintered spar. So he left her unable at least to stir, and after he had gone about came himself yard-arm to yardarm with the superb *Ville de Paris*, the pride of France, the largest ship in the then known world, where De Grasse commanded in person.

"All day long the cannon roared. One by one the French ships struck their flags or fought on till they foundered and went down. The carnage on board them was terrible, crowded as they were with troops. Fourteen thousand were reckoned to have been killed, besides the prisoners. The *Ville de Paris* surrendered last, fighting desperately after hope was gone, till her masts were so shattered that they could not bear a sail, and her decks above and below were littered over with mangled limbs. De Grasse gave up his sword to Rodney on the

Formidable's quarter-deck. The gallant Glorieux, unable to fly and seeing the battle lost, hauled down her flag, but not till the undisable remnants of her crew were too few to throw the dead into the sea. Other ships took fire and blew up. Half the French fleet were either taken or sunk; the rest crawled away for the time, most of them to be picked up like crippled birds.

“ So on that memorable day was the English empire saved! Peace followed, but it was ‘peace with honor.’ The American colonies were lost; but England kept her West Indies [a rather poor exchange]; her flag still floated over Gibraltar; the hostile strength of Europe all combined had failed to twist Britannia's ocean scepter from her: she sat down maimed and bleeding, but the wreath had not been torn from her brow, she was still sovereign of the seas! ” \*

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\* From *The English in the West Indies*. By James Anthony Froude.

## CHAPTER XX

### BARBADOES, TOBAGO, AND TRINIDAD

THAT great naval encounter, which has been called one of the decisive battles of the world, took place under the lee of beautiful Dominica, and in the channel between that island and Guadeloupe. It is worthy of note that these terrible struggles between the French and English were nearly always futile, for the victors rarely retained what their hard-fought battles had won. Much of the spoil of 'Statia was afterward captured on the high seas by the French; nearly all the islands they had taken were restored to the English; and the splendid *Ville de Paris*, De Grasse's flagship, together with other prizes, was sunk in a hurricane off Port Royal the same summer that she was taken by Rodney. Saint Lucia, at one time the only island of the Lesser Antilles uncaptured by the French, was awarded to them by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783; but, retaken by Abercrombie in 1797, has ever since remained in English possession.

But every island in the archipelago treasures the heroic deeds of those forgotten worthies of the past. Near and to the south of Fort Royal, Martinique, rises huge, sea-surrounded Diamond Rock, which once upon a time, as it commanded the entrance to

the port, was seized and fortified by sailors under the command of Lord Howe after the capture of Saint Lucia. It is five hundred feet in height, with sides nearly perpendicular; but those brave British tars swarmed to its summit, and there, with scarce room enough for a foothold, they mounted several guns, with which they peppered away at every French craft that hove in sight, sending some of them to the bottom of the sea. But they were provisioned for a twelvemonth only, and when their supplies failed



“His Majesty's ship Diamond Rock.”

they had to capitulate, as their commander sailed away and left them to their fate. They did so, however, with all the honors of war, as defenders of “his Majesty's ship Diamond Rock”! Near the southern tip of Saint Lucia rises a pair of miniature mountains between two and three thousand feet in height, called the Pitons, which, like Diamond Rock, are isolated from the main island, and which also the British at one time attempted to hold and fortify. But their steep acclivities were infested with that terrible ser-

pent called the *fer-de-lance*, and the unfortunate sailors sent to mount the guns were fatally bitten, one after another, and rolled into the sea; so the attempt was abandoned.

Next south of Saint Lucia, and in line with the general curve of the Caribbees, lies the island of Saint Vincent, with a volcano, now quiescent, that has the honor of being the last from which an eruption occurred in the West Indies. Its crater lake, twenty-five hundred feet above the sea, is a wonder worth visiting; and at one time, while seeking new birds, I camped a week in a cave on its brim, observing with intense enjoyment the phenomena of Nature at this altitude. On the "windward" side of Saint Vincent reside the last remnants of the black Caribs, who a hundred years ago gave battle stoutly to the British invaders of their tropical domain. They differ from the only other family of Caribs (in Dominica) in being very dark of hue, and this is explained by the wrecking of a slave ship here in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the survivors of the disaster having intermarried with the native Indians. In the year 1785, after committing great cruelties, the black Caribs were subdued, the major portion of them expatriated to the coast of Honduras, and their chief, Black Bulla, gibbeted alive in chains, suffering terrible torments for a week before he died.

Southwardly stretching from Saint Vincent is another chain of isles and islets called the Grenadines, terminated by the larger island of Grenada. The Grenadines present the appearance of mountains based deep below the surface of the sea, and only their

tops protruding; but Grenada has not been so extensively invaded by the waters, and its chief harbor seems to have been the crater of an extinct volcano.

Here, also, we are reminded of the once-dominant Caribs by the names of different places, as, for instance, the "Morne des Sauteurs," applied to a great cliff over which the last survivors were driven, and leaped to their death in the war of extermination.

The islands of the Caribbees, or Lesser Antilles, appear on the map as segments of two concentric circles, the inner one volcanic, mountainous, comprising the main chain; the outer of coral formation, low-lying and fragmentary. The most important of these outlying or "windward" islands is Barbadoes, about ninety miles to the eastward of Saint Vincent, all alone in the ocean. It was discovered by some Portuguese, who, finding here a luxuriant growth of wild fig trees, from the limbs of which great masses of filaments depended, called it Barbadoes, or Bearded. When first visited by the English in 1605 there were no inhabitants, the natives having been killed or driven away, and the crew of the Olive Blossom, which had been fitted out by Sir Oliph Leigh, "a worshipful knight of Kent," took possession by erecting a cross with the inscription "James King of England and this island." They did not tarry longer than was necessary to provision their vessel, though the island was extraordinarily fertile, wild pigs, parrots, and pigeons were abundant, and the sea abounded with fish of every sort.

It was not until 1624, or the year following the planting of an English colony at Saint Kitt's, that



Barbadoes was settled. Containing large and level tracts of the richest soil in the West Indies, Barbadoes from the very first flourished exceedingly, and in 1650 it had a white population almost as large as it contains to-day, with a great number of negro slaves. It was then a royal and loyal colony, and so devoted to the interests of deposed King Charles that when Lord Protector Cromwell sent out a fleet and an army to bring its people to terms they made a stout resistance. In 1657, in addition to the negro slaves, the planters purchased several thousand Scotsmen, taken prisoners at the battle of Worcester and sold into slavery at fifteen hundred pounds of sugar per head. Although at first barbarously treated, many of them finally became themselves proprietors and planters, and there have been no white slaves there for at least two hundred years. The Indians of neighboring isles were often decoyed into slavery, however, and a curious narrative illustrating the conditions prevailing at that time may be found in *The Spectator* entitled *Yinkle and Yarico*.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the number of white inhabitants was still less than twenty thousand, while the negroes had increased to more than sixty thousand. It was about this time, or in 1751, that the island was honored by a visit from one who afterward caused the British a great deal of trouble, but who was then unknown. It was at the age of twenty, and as companion of his brother Lawrence, who was then in the last stages of consumption, that George Washington made his only foreign voyage. Lawrence's health had failed, and his physician or-

dered him to the West Indies; and, as he desired George to accompany him, the latter obediently complied. They were five weeks on the voyage, which to-day would consume less than a week; but the young surveyor and major of militia improved every moment in making a practical application of his knowledge of navigation, of which he had hitherto studied only the theory. Once landed at Bridgetown, the capital of that island of superabundant blacks and sugar cane, George saw what was probably his first theatrical performance—the tragedy of George Bromwell—of which, in his conscientious way, he enters a critical notice in his journal. This silent companion of his travels bears testimony that he was in love with the island and its hospitable planters; but still he writes: “How wonderful that such people should be in debt and not able to indulge themselves in all the luxuries as well as the necessaries of life! Yet so it happens. Estates are often alienated for debt. How persons coming to estates of two, three, or four hundred acres can want, is to me most wonderful.”

The brothers hired a pleasant cottage about a mile from town and commanding a view of the bay, where, as aristocratic landed proprietors themselves, they were visited by the first people of the island. At the house of one Judge Maynards they met the members of the “Beefsteak and Tripe Club”; but the meats on the table did not provoke young Washington’s encomiums so much as their tropical concomitants, the delicious fruits, of which he writes admiringly. Unfortunately for his scheme of enjoyment, George was brought low by an attack of smallpox, after he had

been two weeks on the island, and though he soon recovered from it his face bore marks of the disease the rest of his life. So we may say that this was the only gift the "Father of his Country" received from Barbadoes; and Lawrence's health not improving, George was sent back to bring out his wife, departing on the 22d of December for Virginia, and arriving at Mount Vernon the 1st of February, 1752. Lawrence



Carib boys at play, Saint Vincent.

soon followed, and died in June of that year, leaving to his devoted brother that famous estate with which his name is associated. This was the first, last, and only time George Washington was outside the borders of the American colonies, though within their bounds he made many perilous journeys.

Aside from some outbreaks among the slaves, Barbadoes has rejoiced in uninterrupted peace ever

since its foundation as a colony, and having continued in English possession for nearly three hundred years, it is distinctly British still, and most devoted to the motherland. It is as completely English as Martinique and Guadeloupe are French, as shown in the public structures of its capital and the town dwellings of the wealthy planters. But it is in the country districts that Old England is brought to mind, for, were it not for the tropical character of the climate and scenery, one might easily fancy himself in the rural parts of Great Britain, with the churches and chapels of ease draped in masses of ivy, and the well-kept churchyards adjacent. Near the center of this beautiful and highly cultivated island stands Codrington College, the oldest educational establishment in the islands, founded in 1716. It is entirely surrounded by plantations of sugar cane, and within its ivy-covered walls its favored students find seclusion from a distracting world if not the gratification of every taste. Outside are avenues of palms, where the majestic *oreodoxa* uplifts its golden coronal of leaves, and one can hardly imagine a more delightful retreat for the scholar or care-free man of books.

The emancipation of the Barbadian slaves, in 1838, was not attended by the disastrous consequences that ensued in other islands. Owing to their great number and the scarcity of arable land upon which they could obtain a living almost without labor, as in the more mountainous islands, the black Barbadians had the choice either to work or to starve. They chose the former alternative, and to-day there is no more intelligent and industrious population than that

of Barbadoes, where there are at least eleven hundred and fifteen people to the square mile; and of the one hundred and six thousand four hundred acres, at least one hundred thousand acres are in a high state of cultivation.

The sponsors of African slavery in America were the Spaniards, who introduced it into Santo Domingo during the governorship of the inhuman Ovando, and with the approval of the humane Las Casas. But while the Spaniards were responsible for its introduction, the English were equally culpable, for they soon shared in its profits by transporting the unhappy victims from Africa to the West Indies. The first Englishman to sully his country's honor by engaging in this nefarious business was Sir John Hawkins about 1562, and more than two hundred years later the trade in human flesh was so lucrative that when the citizens of Kingston, Jamaica, petitioned the home Government to discourage it, the merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, through the Earl of Dartmouth, declared: "We can not allow the colonies to check or discourage in any degree a traffic so beneficial to the nation"! This was in 1775; but in the first part of the next century the evils of the traffic became so apparent that agitation was directed toward its extinction, and with the result that not only was it eventually suppressed, but the slaves of all English colonies were emancipated. England was generous to her planter colonists, granting them large sums as reimbursement for their losses; but from emancipation dates the decay of West Indian prosperity. The negroes in all the

islands except Barbadoes, finding it possible to supply their wants without much labor, refused to work on the sugar plantations, and the consequence has been the virtual ruin of the islands. In many islands, as in Jamaica and Trinidad, large importations of East Indian coolies were made, under indentures, who temporarily supplied the demand for labor, and became attractive features in the population with their Oriental garb and manners.

France followed England in liberating her slaves, in 1848, and most reluctantly Spain, about twenty years later; so that now, and particularly since the United States released the Cubans and Puerto Ricans from their political servitude, all the people in the vast archipelago are free. We have seen, in our review of Haiti's history, that the black man has not shown an aptitude for civilization and progress at all encouraging to those who have his welfare at heart. He has retrogressed at every point, since the restraining hand of a stronger race has been removed, and in many cases has reverted to genuine African barbarism. Although there are some exceptions, notably that of the black chief justice of Barbadoes, yet on the whole the outlook for the negro's future is not hopeful. In the mountainous islands, particularly, where the blacks can reside in a seclusion unbroken by frequent contact with the whites, they practice the black arts of African sorcery under the name of *obeah*, and indulge, as in Haiti, in barbaric *séances* and festivals, at which sometimes children are killed and eaten. In truth, the cannibal Caribs did no worse, for, like the present semisavages of

the islands, they were but "ritual cannibals," or performed the hideous ceremony from misguided religious motives.

But this is a subject too vast for adequate treatment here. We will conclude our short excursions into these historic fields by mention of the only remaining islands of importance in the West Indies that we have not visited—Tobago and Trinidad. One hundred and twenty miles west of south from Barbadoes lies the little-known island of Tobago, which though at present forlorn and almost destitute of white inhabitants, was at one time contended for with avidity by such great powers as England, Holland, and France, and passed from one to the other like a shuttlecock of evil fortune. Twice, thrice it was ravaged and rendered desolate, and not only deprived of its aboriginal inhabitants, the Caribs, but of such as had settled here, coming over from Great Britain and the Continent.

Tobago is about five miles longer than Barbadoes, but has only half its width, containing one hundred and fourteen square miles of hills, valleys, and mountains; in the main covered with virgin forest, and with a population of less than twenty thousand. Differing, like Trinidad, in geological formation from other islands of the West Indies, it was probably at some distant time sliced off from the adjacent continent of South America, for its flora and fauna are continental in character and not insular. Flora and fauna, both, are tropical and wonderful, as I can testify, having lived a while here, playing Crusoe, years ago. In sooth it was here that I collected the

material for a book of adventure called *Crusoe's Island: a Bird-Hunter's Story*, in which I trace the connection between this island of Tobago and that where the mythic hero Robinson Crusoe lived his grand and solitary life. Tobago, then, is the ideal island of Defoe, and not Juan Fernandez on the farther coast of South America: as is set forth in the book referred to. Aside from its most fascinating natural and historical features, Tobago should be of interest to all hero lovers from having at one time been the residence of Paul Jones, that indomitable fighter and privateer who won the first naval successes of our Revolution. As a French colony during a brief period, Tobago had a voice in the election of Bonaparte; but since the first decade of this century it has been governed as a crown colony of Great Britain.

At last we reach the southernmost island of the West Indies, Trinidad, discovered by Columbus on his third voyage, in 1498, and from whom it received its name on account of its mountain range with three prominent peaks, suggestive to him of the Trinity. It contains seventeen hundred and fifty-four square miles of fertile valleys, high mountains, and elevated hills, yet holds a population but twenty thousand in excess of little Barbadoes. Its staple products are the same as those of the other isles, to which may be added the native woods and bitumen, of which latter there is an inexhaustible supply in the wonderful Pitch Lake, one hundred and ten acres in extent. From this lake is obtained the greater portion of the bitumen or asphalt used in the paving of our streets,



the contract for exploiting and exporting which is held by an American company. Trinidad has been in British possession since 1797, when Abercrombie took it from the Spaniards just previous to his assault upon the Morro at San Juan de Puerto Rico.

The most famous personage with whom Trinidad is identified, next to Columbus, is that brilliant Englishman of the Elizabethan period, Sir Walter Raleigh. It was on this island, in truth, that he met with the most singular of his adventures, and from



it that he sailed, in 1618, to ignominious death at the hands of the royal headsman. Sir Walter's attention to this island off the Orinoco's mouth was attracted by the strange story then prevalent of a kingdom situated up that river called Manoa, where lived the native king, El Dorado, or the Gilded One. Many fabulous tales were related of this mythic kingdom and its gilded ruler, of which the following is the oldest known: He lived in the midst of mountains of diamonds and surrounded by golden hills,

where the precious metal was so abundant that the sovereign fairly reveled in riches. Every year he and his people held a solemn sacrifice, at which this wealthy king smeared his body with turpentine and then rolled in gold dust. Thus gilded and resplendent, he entered his canoe and was taken by his nobles to a temple in the center of a lake, where he deposited offerings of gold, emeralds, and other precious things, after which he plunged into the water to bathe and remove his coating of gold.

The Spaniards believed this story, and more than one expedition was sent in search of El Dorado and the mines of gold—one in particular as early as 1560, starting from Peru, descending the Amazon and Orinoco, and encountering terrible privations on the way. In the year 1595 Raleigh set sail from England with five ships, arriving at Trinidad early in the summer and exploring the Orinoco quite a distance from its mouths, but without finding more than a tradition of the gilded king, and no gold worth the trouble. The strangest part of the story is that he carried back to Elizabeth most glowing reports of his wonderful discoveries, and assured the credulous queen that at sight of her glorious image the king himself had swooned in admiration. The best result of that expedition was the book he wrote about it called *The Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*, with a relation of the Great and Golden City of Manoa, which the Spaniards call El Dorado, performed in the year 1595, by Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight. There is much in this book besides its title, long though it may be, and many

shrewd and quaint observations upon things discovered, and some things unseen, by the gallant knight. Like Columbus, he saw the fat "oisters" growing on trees—the mangroves, which at low tide were submerged; he described the "uglie serpents called largatos," or alligators, and tasted the flesh of the "cachicama," or armadillo.

"The island of Trinidad," he wrote, "hath the form of a sheep hook and is but narrow; the north part is very mountainous; the soil is excellent and will bear sugar, ginger, or other commodity that the Indies yield. It hath store of deer, wild porks, fruits, fish, and fowl. It hath also for bread sufficient maize, cassavi, and of those other roots and fruits which are common everywhere in the West Indies. It hath divers beasts which the [East] Indies have not; the Spaniards confessed that they found grains of gold in some of the rivers. . . . This island is called by the people thereof 'Cairi,' and in it are divers nations; those of Punta Carao are of the Arawacas."

Of the Pitch Lake he wrote: "New Year's Eve we came to anchor at Tierra de Bri, short of the Spanish port some ten leagues. This is a piece of land some two leagues long and a league broad, all stone pitch or bitumen, which riseth out of the ground in little springs or fountains, and so swimming a little way it hardeneth in the air and covereth all the plain. There are also many springs of water, and in and among them many fish. . . . There is that abundance of stone pitch that all the ships of the world may therewith be laden from

thence, and we made trial of it in trinming our ships to be most excellent good, and melteth not with sun, as the pitch of Norway, and therefore for ships trading with the south parts very profitable.”

Alas, poor Sir Walter! If he had but confined himself to observations on the natural features of the island and had not meddled with politics, he might have saved his head. But he could not refrain from having a trial of strength with the Spaniards, to whom the island belonged, and as England and Spain were at peace this put him in bad odor at home. The charges of his enemies that he wished to embroil his country in a war with Spain bore hard upon him when, after his benevolent protectress died, King James gained the throne.

After those long years of imprisonment in the Tower he was released expressly to make another voyage in search of El Dorado, and to prove true those fabulous stories he had invented to please Queen Elizabeth; at all events, he risked his life in the venture. There was doubtless something sinister in the perfidious James's permission to cruise in Spanish waters, with the proviso that Raleigh was not to provoke an encounter with the Spaniards, for the king knew this to be well-nigh impossible. However, he reached Trinidad a second time in 1617, but was taken sick and could not go up the Orinoco, so he gave the command to another. This captain, Keymis, fought the Spaniards, contrary to Sir Walter's orders, lost several men, among them young Sir Walter Raleigh, and burned a town; but found no gold with which to return and avert the king's displeasure.



A cocoa palm grove.

Raleigh had good occasion to reproach this recalcitrant officer, knowing well that his own life was now forfeited, and his reproaches were so keen that poor Keymis ran himself through with his sword.

Thus Trinidad and El Dorado rang the death knell of the great Sir Walter, for immediately upon his return in the *Destiny* (name of evil omen to him) he was arrested, dragged to the Tower, and six months later executed. Although a frivolous courtier, Raleigh was a farseeing statesman, and doubtless really intended that his country should acquire this beautiful island, two hundred years before it actually became a British possession. But in his aspirations he was thwarted by that "wise idiot," King James, who subordinated his kingdom's good to private and unholy aims.

Raleigh's treatment of the Indians was humane, even if his hatred of the Spaniards was intense, and, wrote a historian of the last century, "the Caribs of Guiana still fondly cherish the tradition of his alliance, and to this day preserve the English colors which he left with them at parting."

Standing with him on that lone island off the Orinoco's mouth, at the threshold of the great southern continent, we can not but recall that it was Raleigh who sent out that expedition which resulted in planting the first settlers of English blood in North America. The hundred men under Ralph Lane and Sir Richard Grenville, who composed the Roanoke colony rescued the next year by Sir Francis Drake and taken back to England, sailed through the West Indies in 1585. And that ill-fated band under Mar-

iner White, following in their tracks in 1587, cruised joyously from island to island in the Caribbees ere it was swallowed up in the wilds of Roanoke. With this party were the parents of Virginia Dare, the first child of English parentage born in America, and who was baptized on the 20th of August, 1587.

Yes, before us rise the wraiths of many gallant spirits at one time most intimately connected with the romance and history of these islands. Through the "Serpent's Mouth," which separates Trinidad from Venezuela, Columbus sailed with trepidation into the Gulf of Paria, thence out by way of the "Mouth of the Dragon" to his discovery of the islands of pearls, Cubagua and Margarita. Did not these islands, together with Dutch Curaçao and Buen Ayre, pertain more particularly to South America than to the West Indies, we might have many a tale to tell of them in connection with the history of the famous Spanish Main. Along this coast sailed gallant Ojeda, and with him one Amerigo Vespucci, who became world-famous as the purloiner of laurels belonging to Columbus. Over in Tobago grew the plant which Raleigh has the credit of having introduced into England—whether wisely or not—tobacco, which obtained its name, it is said from that island. On the main, westerly from Trinidad, is an ancient Indian settlement, *Ameraca-pan*, from which (and not from Amerigo Vespucci), some have claimed, was really derived the name bestowed upon the Western continents.

Not alone are great names, held dear by several different nations, intimately associated with West

Indian history, but substantial landmarks present themselves in the military works of at least four nationalities. Around those crumbling fortifications—picturesque, ancient, obsolete—cluster fascinating memories of siege and assault, each one suggesting, if it does not contain, the history in epitome of the port or island it was intended to defend. In the Morro of Havana, for example, we have a reminder of buccaneer times, when Spain was great, and of the British siege of 1762.

The Morro of Santiago has watched the passing of Drake and Hawkins, and withstood the assaults of American battle ships; that of San Juan de Puerto Rico has had similar experience, and likewise repelled French privateers and Dutch adventurers. In Santo Domingo what memories arise at sight of La Navidad, Isabella in its barren ruins, Concepción de la Vega, and the very walls of its capital city! In Haiti who can gaze upon dismantled Fort Picolet and the towering peak of La Ferrière without a shudder at the massacres of Leclerc's and Christophe's time; in Tortuga view the pirates' stronghold altogether unmoved; or in Jamaica, at Port Royal, behold what Nature's cataclysm wrought, without reflection upon the vanity of human achievements?

What true American would not be touched at sight of the ruins of old Fort Orange in 'Statia, where our flag was first saluted; what Englishman see without emotion the decaying forts of Dominica, from which were visible the sails of Rodney's fleet; what Frenchman would not be thrilled at sight of Brimstone Hill, where brave Bouillé routed the British,



and the seaward slopes of Saint Lucia, where he and D'Estaing so desperately fought!

Whatever may be affirmed of the West Indies, it can be truthfully said that their history contains lessons upon which we may ponder with profit to ourselves.



## INDEX

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- Aborigines of the West Indies, 6,  
     23, 37, 39, 62-74.  
 Agouti, 57, 73.  
 Aguadilla, harbor of, 77.  
 Agueynaba, cacique, 224, 227.  
 American Flag, the, first salute of,  
     244.  
 Anacaona, caciquess, 98-103.  
 Anana, or pineapple, 9, 57.  
 Areytos, native songs, 37.  
  
 Bahamas, the, 1, 4, 12.  
 Bahia Honda, 16.  
 Ballenatos, small islands, 17.  
 Baracoa, harbor of, 18, 19; island of,  
     20, 21; town of, 185.  
 Barbadoes, island of, 268-274; slaves  
     of, emancipated, 273.  
 Bartholomew Columbus, 93; gov-  
     ernor of Hispaniola, 94, 96, 98;  
     Anacaona's gifts to, 103; death  
     of, 122.  
 Batabano, bay of, 29.  
 Bateria de la Punta Castle, 195.  
 Battlefields, historic, 251-264.  
 Bimini, island of, 230.  
 Blackbeard, pirate, 235-239.  
 Blanco, governor of Havana, 133.  
 Bloodhounds, Cuban, 219.  
 Bobadilla, governor of Santo Do-  
     mingo, 104, 105, 120, 121.  
 Bohechio, cacique, 91, 96-99.  
 Bohios, or huts, 25.  
 Babeque, or Land of Gold, 34,  
     35.  
 Bonaparte, Napoleon, 163-168, 170.  
 Bouillé, Marquis, 258.  
 Bow of Ulysses, the, 60.  
 Brimstone Hill, fort of, 248.  
 Buccaneers, 72, 140-143; origin of,  
     146; classes of, 147, 148.  
  
 Cabanas, harbor of, 16.  
 Cabo de la Cruz, 28, 32.  
 Cacique, Indian, 21, 23, 40, 57.  
 Cannibal Caribs of Dominica, 63-  
     72; area occupied by, 65; of Saint  
     Vincent, 73; relics of, 74, 75.  
 Canoe, 19, 116; discovered by Co-  
     lumbus, 55, 56.  
 Caonabo, cacique, 89, 91, 93, 98, 99.  
 Caparra, first city of Puerto Rico,  
     225.  
 Casa Blanca, Puerto Rico, 231.  
 Cascabel, relic, 88.  
 Cassava, native bread, 8, 37, 57.  
 Catalina, 89.  
 Cat Island, 2, 3.  
 Cervera, Admiral, fleet of, 191-194.  
 Charlotte Amalie, town of, 234, 235.  
 Christophe, Henry, king of Haiti,  
     165, 169, 176-182.

- Christopher's Cove, 205; Indians of, 205, 206.
- Cibao, or gold region, 91.
- Ciceroo, parrot, 71.
- Cienfuegos, port of, 13.
- Codrington College, 272.
- Columbus, Christopher, first voyage of, 3, 10; at Guanahani, 3; landing place, Watling's Island, 5; on north coast of Cuba, 13, 17; in search of Cipango, 17; at Baracoa, 18; at Cape Maysi, 26; on south coast of Cuba, 27; at Bay of Guantnamo, 27; on north coast of Jamaica, 28, 31; at Bay of Batabano, 29; on south shore of Jamaica, 31; sails around Haiti, 31; at Isabella, 31; made four voyages to America, 32; names the islands, 36; journal of, 40, 41, 42; Santa Maria, flagship of, 35; wreck of, 43; guest of Guacanagari, 41, 45, 46; builds fort at La Navidad, 48; finds gold, 51; enters Bay of Samaná, 53; sails for Spain, 54; departs on second voyage, 59; discovers Puerto Rico, 77; founded Isabella, 80; in Santo Domingo, 83-86; builds forts, 85; subjugates the Indians, 88; in prison, 105; sent back to Spain, 106; where are the remains of? 127; placed in cathedral, Santo Domingo, 128; alleged transfer to Havana, 128; tomb of, 128; recent discovery of remains, 130; casket containing bones of, 131; author views remains of, 132; driven by storm to Jamaica, 205; predicts an eclipse of the moon, 205; death of, 208; discovers Trinidad, 276; discovers Pearl Islands, 283.
- Columbus Point, 2.
- Concepción de la Vega, fort of, 85, 86; bell tower of, 86, 87; attack of, 94.
- Conchs of the Bahamas, 7.
- Cortes, Hernan, 185, 187.
- Cotton discovered by Columbus, 8, 24.
- Cotubanama, cacique, 91, 116.
- Crabs, 137.
- Cristobal Colon, battleship, 28.
- Crocodile, 56.
- Cromwell, Oliver, 210, 211.
- Croton eleutheria, a herb, 9.
- Cuba, island of, 13, 199; harbors of, 14, 18; natives of, 63; invasion of, by United States troops, 202; an American possession, 202.
- Curari, poison, 69.
- Dare, Virginia, birth of, 233.
- De Grasse, Captain, 260-263.
- Dessalines, Jean Jacques, emperor of Haiti, 165, 170-176.
- Diamond Rock, 265.
- Diego Columbus, 119, 121, 208, 209.
- Diego Mendez, 95, 206; discovers gold, 96.
- Diego Velasquez, founded first city in Cuba, 20, 184, 189.
- Dominica, island of, 61.
- Doria, Andrew, a brigantine, 244.
- Drake, Sir Francis, 134, 189, 233, 252.
- Edwards, Bryan, of Jamaica, 113.
- El Dorado, king, 277, 278.
- Eleuthera, island of, 9.
- Elizabeth, queen of England, 278.
- Evangelista, island of, 31.
- Farine made from manioc, 70.
- Faro Concha, or shell lighthouse, 25.

- Fer-de-lance, serpent, 267.  
 Ferdinand, king of Spain, 88, 119.  
 Ferdinand de Soto, 196.  
 Forts built and named, 48, 85, 86.  
 Fountain of Youth, 228.  
 French and English, struggles between the, 265.  
 Froude, James Anthony, 248.  
  
 Gardens of the Queen, the, 28; Indians of, 29.  
 Gold found, 108.  
 Goleta, coasting vessel, 80, 81.  
 Great Khan, 6, 62; Columbus sent embassy to, 21-23.  
 Grenada, island of, 267.  
 Guacanagari, cacique, 21, 23, 40-45, 57, 78, 88, 89.  
 Guadeloupe, island of, 61, 68, 77, 230, 258; waterfall of, 63.  
 Guanahani, first land discovered by Columbus, 8; Indians of, 6.  
 Guantanamo, bay of, 27.  
 Guarionex, cacique, 90, 94, 95.  
 Guira, instrument of music, 58.  
  
 Haiti, island of, 33, 35; harbors of, 39; natives of, 63; revolution in, 158, 163; governor of, 178, 174.  
 Haitien, Cape, 57, 157.  
 Hammocks, 8, 23, 57, 68.  
 Havana, city of, 188, 195-198.  
 Helps, Sir Arthur, historian, 112.  
 Henrique, cacique, 185, 186.  
 Herrera, historian, 10, 17, 184.  
 Higüey, province of, 91, 117.  
 Humboldt, 16, 29, 30.  
 Hurricanes, 196.  
 Hyppolite, president of Haiti, 183.  
  
 Indian corn (maize), 37, 57, 88.  
 Indians, first seen by Columbus, 6, 23; huts of, 23; of Cuba, 23; relics and implements of, 26, 37, 55; of Haiti, 7, 37-39; of Santo Domingo, 90-96; gold found by, 108; tortured by Spaniards, 114; of Hispaniola, 118; antiquities of, 214.  
 Isabella, island of, 31; city of, founded, 80; ruins of, 82, 96.  
 Isle of Pines, 31.  
  
 Jarama, silk-cotton tree, 116.  
 Jibara, hills of, 16, 18.  
 Jones, Paul, privateer, 276.  
 Josephine, empress, 255-257; statue of, 253-255; birthplace of, 255.  
 Journal of Columbus, 10, 11, 18, 53, 56.  
 Juana (Cuba), 17.  
  
 La Ferrière, fortress of, 178-180.  
 Lagoons, 17, 80.  
 La Navidad, 48; massacre at, 89.  
 Landfall of Columbus, 3-5.  
 La Pagerie, estate of, 255.  
 La Rabida, monastery of, 49.  
 Las Casas, bishop, 117, 122, 187; biography of, 122-125.  
 Leclerc, General, 164, 165, 169, 170.  
 Lesser Antilles, the, 60, 240, 268; Columbus names the islands, 77.  
 Limonade, Comte de, 177.  
 Lolonnois, buccaneer, 148, 149.  
 Lucayans, Indians, 7, 46.  
  
 Macaca, province of, 32.  
 Maguana, town of, 98.  
 Maine, United States battle ship, sinking of the, 201.  
 Manioc, 70, 72.  
 Marco Polo, Venetian traveler, 21.  
 Maria Teresa, Cervera's flagship, 1, 2.  
 Marie Galante, island of, 61.

- Maroons, of Jamaica, 215-222.  
 Martinique, island of, 252, 253.  
 Martyr, Peter, historian, 97, 154, 208, 228.  
 Matanzas, port of, 16.  
 Matapie, a basket, 72.  
 Mayobanex, cacique, 95.  
 Monte Cristi, 77, 78, 94.  
 Montezuma, king of Mexico, 46.  
 Montserrat, island of, 77.  
 Morgan, Henry, buccaneer, 211, 212.  
 Morro Castle, 186, 195, 231.  
 Mount Misery, 248.  
  
 Narvaez, Pamphilo de, 196.  
 Neiba, bay of, 98.  
 Nevis, island of, 250.  
 Nina, one of Columbus's fleet, 44, 51.  
 Nispero de Colon, 84.  
 Nuevitas, port and harbor of, 17.  
 Nugget of gold, 108.  
  
 Obeah, sorcerer, 274.  
 Ocampo, circumnavigated Cuba, 31, 184; at Hispaniola, 123.  
 Ojeda, Alonso de, with Columbus, 91-93, 122.  
 Orange, fort of, 244.  
 Ovando, Nicolas de, 106, 107, 109; barbarities of, 111, 112, 116.  
 Ozama River, 103; palace on, 119.  
  
 Pan de Cabanas, 16.  
 Pan de Mariel, 16.  
 Parkman, author of *Pioneers of France in the New World*, 112.  
 Parrots, 9, 10.  
 Pedro de Cordova, a Franciscan monk, 121.  
 Phipps, Captain William, 152, 155.  
 Pinta, one of Columbus's fleet, 10, 52, 58.  
  
 Pinzon, captain of the Pinta, 35, 52, 53.  
 Pitch Lake, Trinidad, 276, 279.  
 Pitons, mountains, 266.  
 Ponce de Leon, 12, 196, 223-230; death of, 230.  
 Porto Bueno, harbor of Jamaica, 203.  
 Port Royal, harbor and city of, 211-214.  
 Puerto Plata, harbor of, 53.  
 Puerto Rico, island of, 77, 223; Indian relics of, 227; capital of, 231, 232.  
  
 Quisqueya, native name of Santo Domingo, 35.  
  
 Raleigh, Sir Walter, 210, 277-283.  
 Relics of West Indies destroyed, 113.  
 Remora, the, fish, 29.  
 Rio del Oro, or River of Gold, 51, 52.  
 Robertson, Dr., historian, 115.  
 Robespierre, 158.  
 Rochambeau, General, 167, 171, 172.  
 Roderick de Triana, 10.  
 Rodney, Admiral Lord, 245, 260-264.  
 Roldan, 94, 104, 108.  
 Roucou, coloring, 65.  
  
 Saba, island of, 241.  
 Saint Christophers, island of, 77.  
 Saint Eustatius, island of, 241, 246.  
 Saint Kitt's, island of, 145, 246.  
 Saint Lucia, island of, 258, 265.  
 Saint Thomas, island of, 284.  
 Saint Vincent, island of, 73, 75; volcano of, 267; Caribs of, 267.  
 Samaná, bay of, 53, 90, 165.  
 San Juan, city of, 231; battle of, 193.

- San Nicolas, city of, 37, 38.  
 San Salvador, island of, first discovered by Columbus, 2, 3, 7, 8.  
 Sans Souci, palace of, 178-180.  
 Santa Cruz, island of, 77, 146.  
 Santa Maria, 12; flagship of Columbus, 35; anchor of, found, 49; wreck of, 43.  
 Santiago de Cuba, harbor of, 27, 188; city of, 186-190; fall of, 194.  
 Santiago de los Caballeros, city of, 157.  
 Santo Cerro, or Holy Hill, 83, 84.  
 Santo Domingo, island of, 35; city of, 93, 165; founded, 96; origin of, 103; church and monastery of, 122; ruins of first university in, 122; the oldest European settlement in the New World, 126; old cathedral of, 127; extinction of Indians of, 136; president of, 138.  
 Sargasso Sea, 55.  
 Seats, aboriginal, 22, 26.  
 Sevilla Nueva, city of, 208.  
 Slavery, introduction of, 273.  
 Spanish Town, 209.  
 Ten Years' War, the, 201.  
 Thunderbolts, 7.  
 Tobacco, 283.  
 Tobago, island of, 275, 276.  
 Tortuga, or Turtle Island, 33, 35; buccaneers of, 33, 142; description of, 142, 143; resort of pirates, 149.  
 Toussaint L'Ouverture, 161-168.  
 Treasure Cove, 150.  
 Trinidad, port of, 29; island of, 276, 279.  
 Trois Ilet, 255.  
 Turquino, a mountain, 28.  
 Washington, George, 269-271.  
 Watling's Island, landing place of Columbus, 3, 5; author's visit to, 5, 6.  
 West Indies, the, history in epitome of, 284.  
 Words added to our language, 57, 63.  
 Wrecks, Spanish, in Caribbean Sea, 151.  
 Xaragua, province of, 79, 97, 98, 104; massacre of natives of, 109, 119; Spanish atrocities in, 117.  
 Yunque (the Anvil) mountain, 20, 21.





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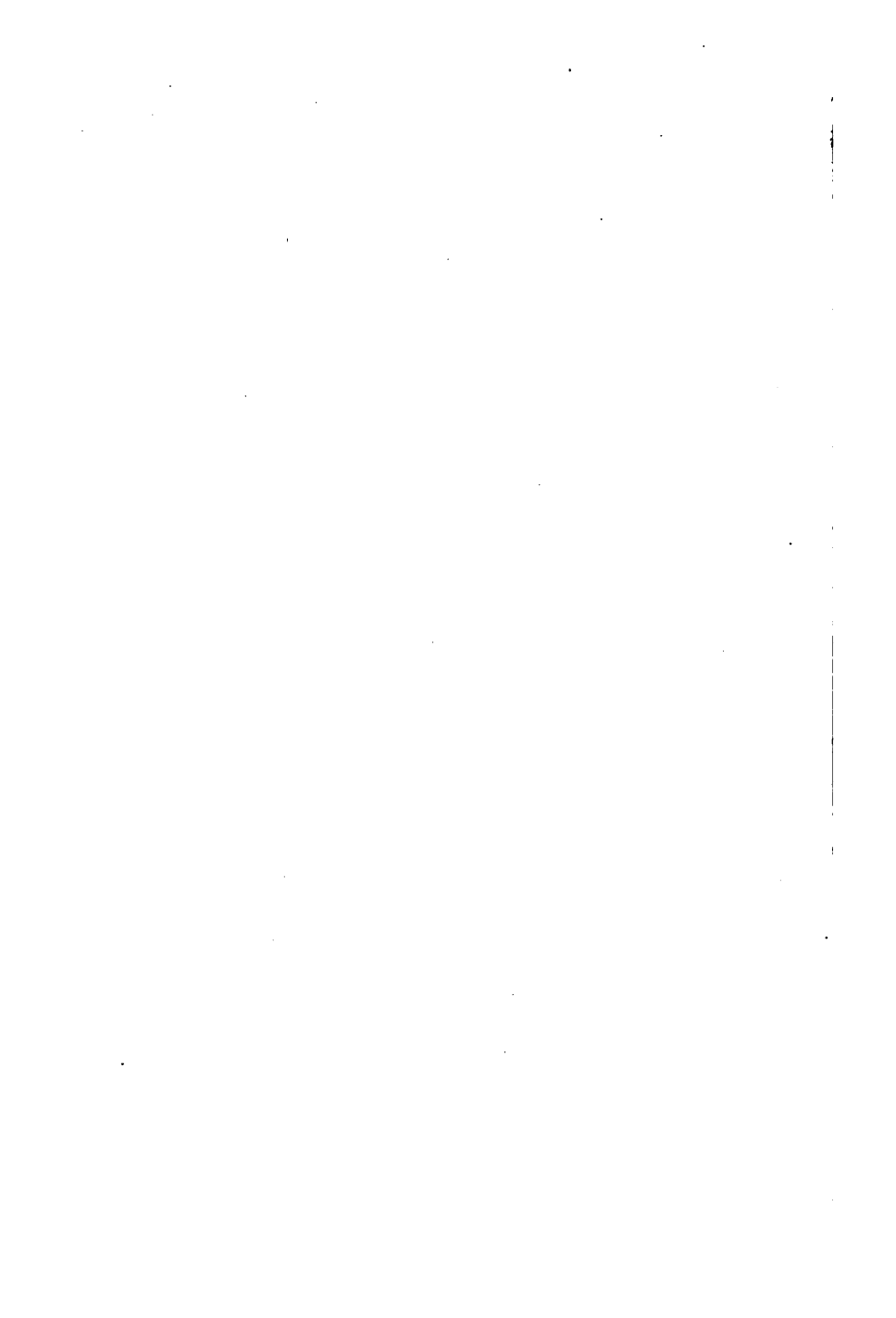
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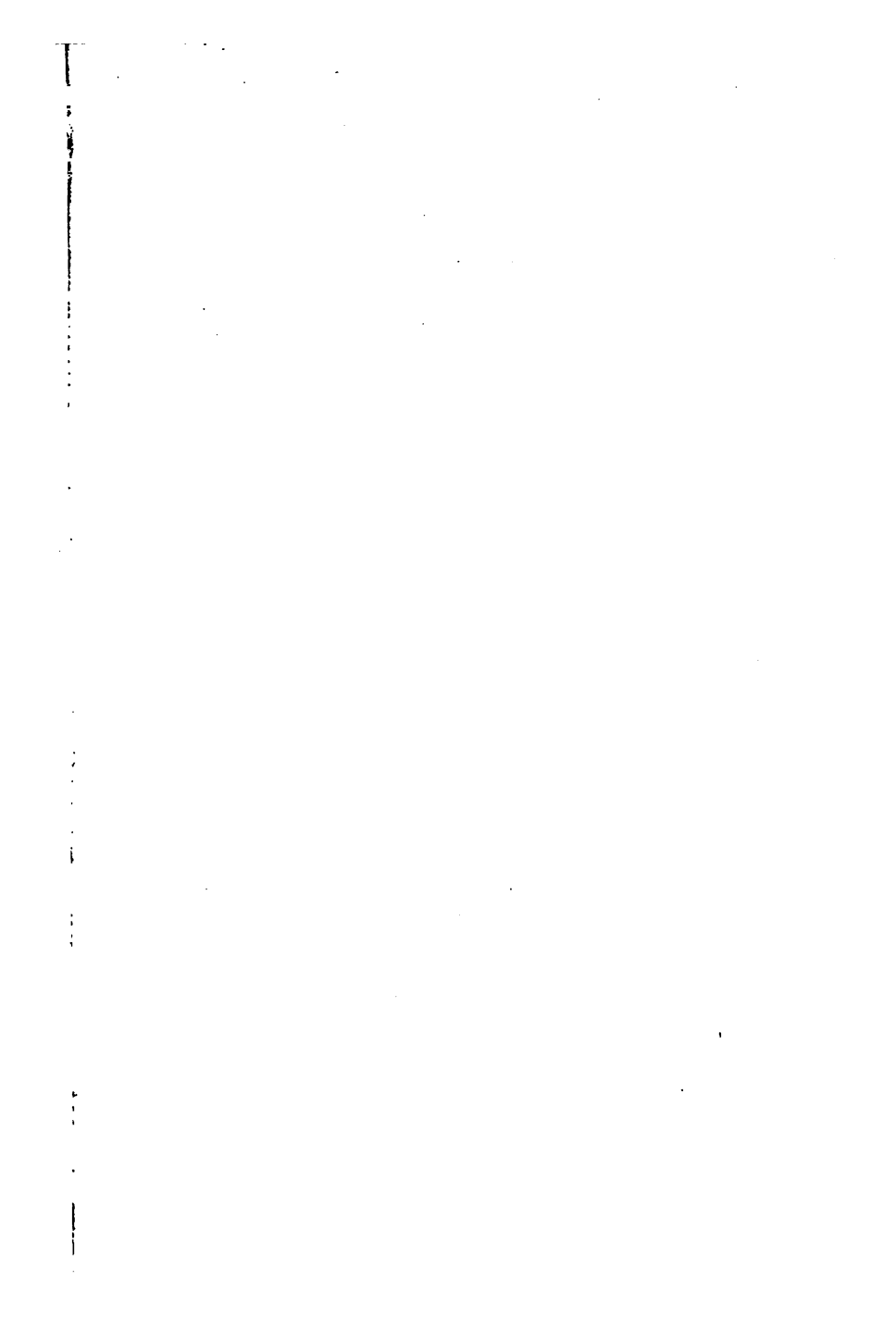
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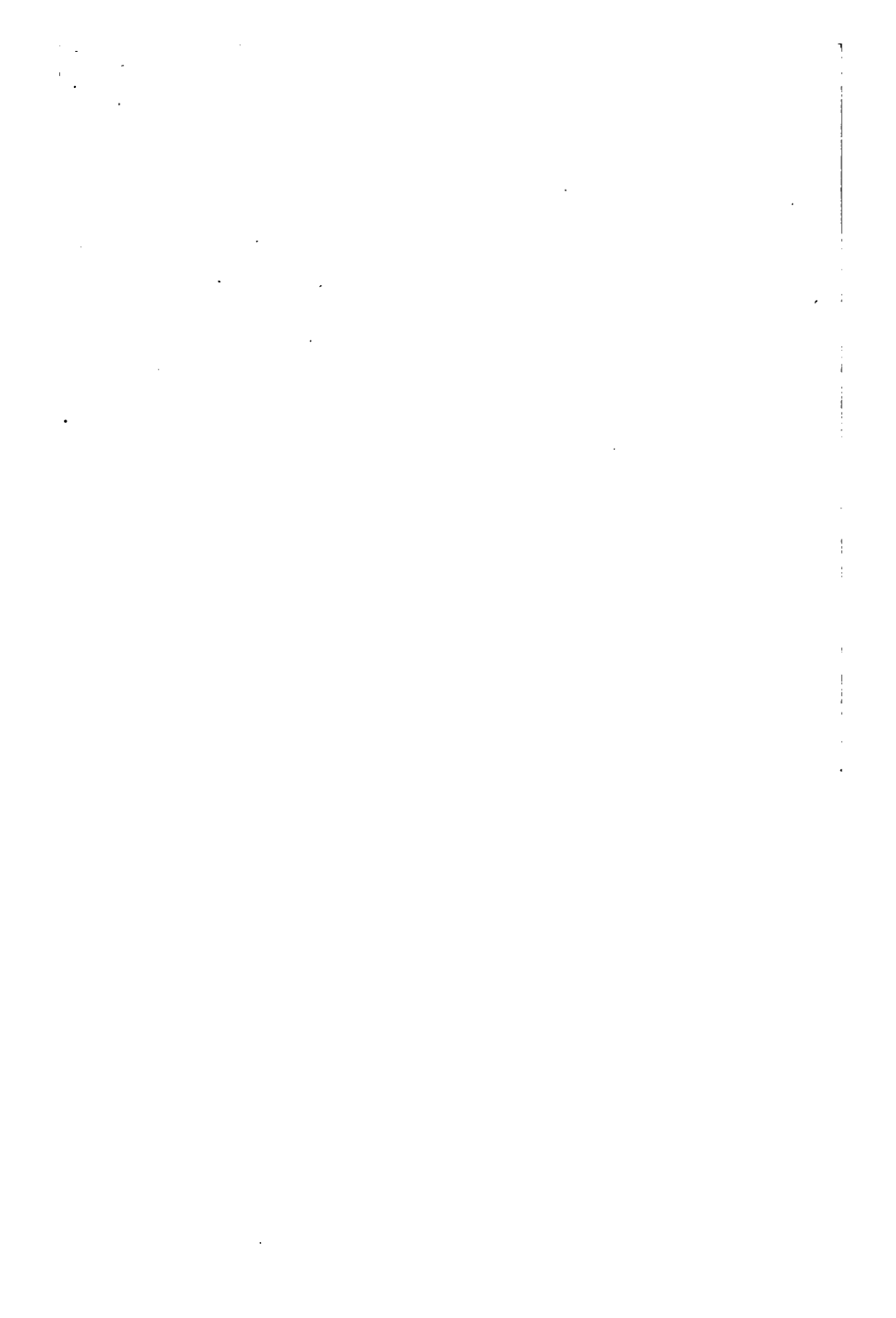
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